SALVAGING A RECORD FOR HUMANKIND: URGENT ANTHROPOLOGY AT THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, 1964-1984

by
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the development of an international research program called "urgent anthropology" organized by scientists and staff at the Smithsonian Institution from the mid-1960s until the 1980s. It shows how through the program's expansion during this period, ideas of urgency came to hold different meanings for different groups of people and provided a useful framework for research cutting across the natural and social sciences. By situating urgent anthropology as a product of Cold War anxieties, this dissertation also considers larger questions about the potential and limitations of museums as sites for interdisciplinary research, the application of new investigative technologies (such as ethnographic film), and the shifting responsibilities and challenges facing museums and archives for preserving records of human diversity.

Following in the tradition of turn-of-the-century salvage anthropology, urgent anthropology began as a project devoted to the documentation of linguistic, behavioral, and physical data from cultures perceived to be disappearing after World War II. Under the leadership of its principal organizers, Smithsonian Secretary S. Dillon Ripley and his advisor on anthropology, University of Chicago anthropologist Sol Tax, this initiative grew into a multidisciplinary project that championed the integration of perspectives from the human sciences, especially anthropology, with contemporary views on environmental conservation and ecology. This collaboration could best be achieved within the Smithsonian's museums, where researchers could more easily cross disciplinary boundaries and could apply the outcomes of their work to construct exhibits displaying a variety of social and scientific topics. In addition, the Institution's museums provided a built-in repository where artifacts, field notes, ethnographic films, and other

materials could be stored for future use. Through this approach, the study of human beings and their cultures became a central means of confronting some of the radical transformations of the 1960s and 1970s.

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Introduction: Noble Salvage?

> For throughout, in the stress for salvage, we feel that in the disappearance of the savage, in the irrevocable erosion of the human condition, we inevitably lose something of our own identity.
>
> —Jacob W. Gruber, "Ethnographic Salvage and the Shaping of Anthropology," 1970.[1]

Ethnographic Salvage and the Foundations of Urgent Anthropology

"Before it's too late! Before it's too late!" So goes the oft-repeated refrain of nineteenth and early-twentieth century anthropology identified by anthropologist and historian Jacob Gruber in his 1970 article, "Ethnographic Salvage and the Shaping of Anthropology." In this piece, he described the discipline's long preoccupation with the collection and preservation of ethnographic data from cultures whose ways of life were perceived to be rapidly and irretrievably lost as a result of contact with Western settlers and explorers. He argued that the impending destruction of these groups instilled early anthropologists with a shared sense of moral and scientific obligation to create and safeguard a record of these peoples before it was too late, a mentality characterizing the practice of what became known as "salvage anthropology."[2] As natural historians sought

[1] Jacob W. Gruber, "Ethnographic Salvage and the Shaping of Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 72 (1970): 1289-1299.

[2] This practice included the collection of material artifacts, ethnographic descriptions, languages, photographs, and other cultural materials. In the mid-twentieth century, it also applied to the collection of blood and bodily tissue. For other examples of salvage anthropology in practice, see Joanna Radin, "Life on Ice: Frozen Blood and Biological Variation in a Genomic Age, 1950-2010," (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2012), Sadiah Qureshi, "Dying Americans: Race, Extinction and Conservation in the New World," in *From plunder to preservation: Britain and the heritage of empire, c. 1800-1940*, ed. Astrid Swenson and Peter Mandler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 269-288, Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), and Rosalind C. Morris, *New Worlds from Fragments: Film, Ethnography, and the Representation of Northwest Coast Cultures* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1994).

to collect and catalog diverse forms of plant and animal life (some of which were threatened by the destructive influence of humans) by preserving specimens within museums, botanical gardens, and zoos, so too did anthropologists seek to preserve their data for future researchers.

Gruber contended that this salvage mentality in turn helped define the research questions and approaches of anthropology as it took shape as an independent discipline at the turn of the century.[3] In his view, the concept of salvage provided a mechanism through which anthropologists could situate and explore the stages of human development by treating the assemblage of ethnographic data as a kind of time capsule in which "savagery met civilization, the presumed past met the present, stability met change."[4] This conceptual framework also brought with it the realization that anthropologists could only pursue the scientific study of humankind and its development by possessing a complete ethnographic record, as any gaps in data would result in imperfect analysis. Thus as Gruber observed, anthropology's preoccupation with salvage persisted well into the mid-twentieth century, even as the discipline abandoned its methodological ties to natural history in favor of more theoretically-oriented questions.[5]

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[3] While Gruber refers to anthropology in a broad sense in his essay, the discipline formed and developed somewhat differently in each of its primary national contexts. Most literature on the history of anthropology covers its development in Germany, France, and especially in Great Britain and in the United States. Although this dissertation is mostly focused on the American tradition, it does occasionally refer to theoretical and methodological contributions coming from other national contexts. For an overview of the discipline's development in each of its four major traditions, see Fredrik Barth, Robert Parkin, Andre Gingrich, and Sydel Silverman, eds., *One Discipline, Four Ways: British, German, French, and American Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), and Henrika Kuklick, *A New History of Anthropology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008).

[4] Gruber, "Ethnographic Salvage and the Shaping of Anthropology," 1298.

[5] As a discipline partially grounded in the study of material culture, anthropology initially focused on the collecting cultural artifacts and examples of human ingenuity that could be studied, compared, and displayed in museums. The emergence of institutions and university departments devoted solely to anthropological work at the turn of the century helped professionalize the field and allowed for gradual transition away from the museum towards the development of social and cultural theories. For more on anthropology's changing relationship with museums, see the essays in George W. Stocking, Jr., ed.,

It is within this tradition of salvage that the Smithsonian's urgent anthropology program first took shape. Established in 1966 by Smithsonian Secretary S. Dillon Ripley and his advisor on anthropology, University of Chicago anthropologist Sol Tax, the program was a direct response to a speech given by French ethnologist Claude Lévi-Strauss during the 1965 bicentennial celebration of the birth of James Smithson, founder of the Smithsonian Institution. In this speech, he urged his listeners to follow the example set by the Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology to actively pursue the documentation of vanishing cultural forms.[6] According to Lévi-Strauss, such a task proved especially urgent after World War II, as shifting geopolitical borders and the introduction of new kinds of communication technologies in previously isolated parts of the globe threatened to permanently alter the lifeways of the peoples inhabiting those areas.[7] Moreover, he argued that assembling this data proved equally important for ensuring the future of anthropology as a distinct science—a point highlighted by Gruber as an example of the enduring legacy of salvage anthropology.[8] Yet urgent anthropology at the Smithsonian expanded beyond its turn-of-the-century salvage roots in several key ways. Most critically, it provided a useful conceptual and organizational framework for

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Objects and Others (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), as well as in Mary Bouquet, ed., *Academic Anthropology and the Museum: Back to the Future* (New York: Berghahn, 2001).

[6] Established by Congress in 1879 and directed by geologist-explorer John Wesley Powell, the Bureau set out to systematically survey and collect information from displaced Native American communities residing in the Western regions of the United States. For more on Powell and the early history of the Bureau, see, for starters, Neil M. Judd, *The Bureau of American Ethnology: A Partial History* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), Richard B. Woodbury and Nathalie F.S. Woodbury, "The Rise and Fall of the Bureau of American Ethnology," *Journal of the Southwest* 41(Autumn 1999): 283-296, Curtis M. Hinsley, Jr., *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology, 1846-1910* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), and William C. Darrah, *Powell of the Colorado* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951).

[7] Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Anthropology: Its Achievements and Future," *Current Anthropology* 7 (April 1966): 124-127.

[8] In Gruber's words: "Lévi-Strauss still sees the urgency in the continuing disappearance of human societies as he sees that disappearance, the threat of the extinction of cultures, poses particular problems of identification for the field of anthropology itself." Gruber, "Ethnographic Salvage and the Shaping of Anthropology," 1290.

synthesizing perspectives from the anthropological and ecological sciences in response to a broad range of social and scientific problems. Through this method, the study (and salvage) of human beings and their cultures became a central means of confronting some of the radical transformations of the 1960s and '70s.

This dissertation uses the development of Smithsonian urgent anthropology to explore how ideas of urgency were manifested within scientific discourse about the relationship of humans to their changing natural and socio-political landscapes. Although created as a distinct research program within the Smithsonian, I argue that urgent anthropology took on different meanings to different people. In doing so, this dissertation synthesizes topics addressed by scholars working in the history of anthropology, environmental history, and the history of museums. By situating urgent anthropology as a product of Cold War anxieties, it also speaks to larger questions about the potential and limitations of museums as sites for interdisciplinary research, the application of new investigative technologies (in this case, film), and the shifting responsibilities and challenges facing museums and archives for preserving records of human diversity.

In tracing the different meanings of urgency, especially critical to this narrative are the views of Dillon Ripley and Sol Tax, who each conceived of urgent anthropology as an extension of his individual scientific philosophy. For Ripley, the idea that threatened cultural forms ought to be recorded and preserved for future study fitted nicely within his museum-based approach to ecology and environmental conservation, and with his idea that humans interacted with their environments much like other organisms. For Tax, the international scope of the Smithsonian's urgent anthropology program matched his own efforts to organize a global community of anthropologists working across

different subspecialties. Under his direction, the program also acted as a vehicle through which to cultivate his method of action anthropology. Through the combination of these goals, Ripley and Tax transformed urgent anthropology from a strictly salvage endeavor into a cross-disciplinary approach to the study and display of human beings. As the primary organizers of urgent anthropology, the conditions influencing their thinking and their eventual collaboration stand at the core of this study.

The conceptual weight of urgent anthropology also resonated with larger transformations facing anthropology overall. Published in 1970, Gruber's criticisms of turn-of-the-century anthropology's preoccupation with the documentation of so-called primitive cultures mirrored larger anxieties emerging at the time about the need for the discipline to reconsider its research methods and subject of study. These concerns were further precipitated by the social and political revolutions of the late 1960s and early 1970s, especially the Vietnam War.[9] Historians of anthropology have characterized this moment of critical self-reflection as the discipline's "period of crisis," a time when anthropologists took stock of their past involvement in political projects as well as their professional and ethical obligations to represent the interests of the communities they studied.[10] This moment also prompted anthropologists to experiment with more "reflexive" methods that accounted for any biases they might unknowingly carry into

[9] The literature on the history of these themes in Cold War anthropology, though relatively recent, is not insubstantial. For an introduction to some of its major themes and players, see Dustin M. Wax, ed., *Anthropology at the Dawn of the Cold War: The Influence of Foundations, McCarthyism, and the CIA* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), Peter Mandler, "Deconstructing 'Cold War Anthropology,'" in *Uncertain Empire: American History and the Idea of the Cold War*, ed. Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 245-266, and, Laura Nader, "The Phantom Factor: The Impact of the Cold War on Anthropology," in *The Cold War & The University: Toward an Intellectual History of the Postwar Years*, ed. Noam Chomsky (New York: The New Press, 1997), 107-146.

[10] For extended discussion of the political dimensions of anthropology during these years and especially the shifting dynamics between anthropologists and government agencies, see David Price, *Cold War Anthropology: The CIA, The Pentagon, and the Growth of Dual Use Anthropology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

their research and representation of other societies.[11] Discussions about the intended function of a program in urgent anthropology inevitably generated debates about what urgency meant to a discipline in the midst of reconceiving its identity. Similarly, the program's global scope revealed the ambiguity of urgent anthropology as a distinct research category, as anthropologists from around the world disagreed about which areas or projects required urgent study and to what end.

Despite this lack of consensus, ideas of urgency proved advantageous to a variety of scholars eager to define or justify their own approaches to the study of human beings. For example, urgent anthropology's archival demands benefited the interests of a select group of Smithsonian anthropologists who sought to push the boundaries of what it meant to be a curator of anthropology beyond the development and management of exhibits. According to this group, the urgent need to create a repository of ethnographic data superseded the mounting of displays. At the same time, the rhetoric of urgency legitimized the efforts of those members of the Institution's staff seeking to transform its museums into sites for educating the public about current social and scientific problems, including environmental degradation, overpopulation, drug abuse, and war, among others. The urgent need to document those cultures disappearing or undergoing change also aided pioneers in ethnographic film and visual anthropology, who offered the use of the motion picture camera as an attractive solution to the problem of creating an ethnographic record in exchange for funding support and academic recognition. Finally, the rhetorical power of urgency helped enable the creation of projects that cut across

[11] The best overview of this period and its ramifications for the field's methodological and epistemological transition during the "reflexive turn" of the 1980s is Matti Bunzl's "Anthropology Beyond Crisis: Toward an Intellectual History of the Extended Present," *Anthropology and Humanism* 30 (2005): 187-195.

disciplinary boundaries with the promise that doing so would prove essential for securing the future of human survival.

Why pursue urgent anthropological research? What can it accomplish? These questions drive the next two chapters of this dissertation and cover the early careers and intellectual development of the program's main organizers, Dillon Ripley and Sol Tax. Chapter two looks at how Ripley's early museum work and travels abroad inspired his sympathies for anthropology and his understanding of humans as part of, and not separate from, their natural environment. I argue that these views influenced his efforts to reintegrate perspectives from anthropology with research on conservation and ecosystem management, a task he intended to achieve through the Smithsonian's museum structure.

In chapter three, I consider the contributions of Ripley's advisor on anthropology, Sol Tax, as an organizer and leader in establishing an international network of anthropologists after World War II. Highlighting these activities and especially his role as founding editor of the journal *Current Anthropology* suggests why Ripley chose him to manage the development of the Smithsonian's anthropological programs. Additionally, this chapter outlines the intellectual foundations of Tax's theory and method of action anthropology, which would become his primary means for organizing urgent anthropological research.

What was the focus of urgent anthropological research and who was it for? Chapter four traces discussions about the parameters and scope of urgent anthropology through a series of conferences held between 1966 and 1968. In doing so, it looks at how changing definitions of urgency reflected the larger anxieties of anthropology in general as the discipline entered its period of "crisis" in the late 1960s. Likewise, these

transformations raised questions among the Smithsonian's anthropologists about their shifting curatorial responsibilities and the extent to which they should pursue international research over the management of exhibits. This chapter concludes with the establishment of the Center for the Study of Man and shows how the Center's programs expanded urgent anthropology from a salvage project into a multidisciplinary endeavor bridging the human and natural sciences.

Chapter five reviews plans to apply the Center's interdisciplinary activities to the construction of a brand new Museum of Man. In keeping with Ripley's aims to integrate perspectives from anthropology and ecology, this chapter analyzes his efforts to use the proposed Museum of Man to develop a museum-based approach to the study and display of human ecology. Ultimately, however, the Museum was never built, a consequence of both intellectual and administrative ambiguities surrounding its position with the larger structure of the Smithsonian Institution. This chapter thus speaks to both the possibilities and limitations of museums for facilitating cross-disciplinary work.

Finally, chapter six returns directly to the pursuit of urgent anthropology by looking at how ethnographic film became an important tool for both documenting and archiving records of changing cultures. It does so by chronicling the history of the National Anthropological Film Center and its focus on the production of objective research film documents under the guidance of its first director, Richard Sorenson. Tying the creation of these films to urgent anthropology and its interdisciplinary expansion within the Smithsonian context highlights their important scientific potential today as part of the holdings of the Human Studies Film Archives.

Humans, Conservation, and the Endangerment Sensibility

Urgent anthropology's use as a rallying cry for projects in the ecological as well as the anthropological sciences makes it an important case for reassessing the place of human beings within histories of ecology and environmental conservation, particularly in the United States. As has been well-documented by environmental historians, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed an increased interest in the place of humans in nature, an attitude supported both by the expansion of natural history as a legitimate pastime and profession and by the prevalence of romantic ideas about the need for humans to both overcome and maintain balance within the natural world.[12] By the turn of the twentieth century, however, the systematic cataloging of plant and especially animal specimens within museums and other repositories made apparent the deleterious influence of humans on the environment. Mark Barrow has argued that this realization caused naturalists to adopt a discourse of extinction that in turn precipitated scientific arguments supporting the enactment of government policies identifying and preserving endangered species.[13] The prevalence of such discourse during this period likewise characterized humans primarily as agents of environmental destruction and in doing so repositioned them as outside forces acting against the natural world, instead of as biological organisms living within it. This distinction had a profound effect on the development of American ecology during the twentieth century, as efforts to measure and

[12] For an extended discussion of these ideas, see Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
[13] Mark V. Barrow, Jr., *Nature's Ghosts: Confronting Extinction from the Age of Jefferson to the Age of Ecology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

assess what constituted a "balanced" environment proved simpler without the unpredictability of the human element.[14]

Yet as Sadiah Qureshi has rightly shown, connecting conservation policy to an earlier extinction discourse calling for the preservation of endangered plants and animals while relegating humans to their position as destroyers of the natural world is problematic, as similar rhetoric was also employed to describe the inevitable fate of indigenous peoples "doomed to die" in the wake of human progress.[15] Like Barrow, she argues that ideas of endangerment and extinction were used to support federal policies affecting the management of specific populations—in her case not endangered birds or bison, but instead Native Americans. As she shows, in addition to justifying westward expansion through policies of Indian removal, extinction discourse also underlined larger discussions about the need to preserve indigenous ways of life.[16] Such conversations paralleled and often intersected with early conservation efforts to set aside federally protected areas of land, leading to the eventual establishment of America's first national parks.[17] This in turn bolstered rising perceptions of the natural world as an inherently pristine landscape that could only be altered through direct human interference and that stood in stark contrast with the smoke towers and emerging cityscapes signifying America's industrial progress.

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[14] See Sharon E. Kingsland, *The Evolution of American Ecology, 1890-2000* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), as well as her arguments about the application of quantifiable models in ecological analysis outlined in *Modeling Nature: Episodes in the History of Population Ecology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985).
[15] Sadiah Qureshi, "*Dying Americans*," 284-285.
[16] Ibid.
[17] For a discussion on how these ideas continue to influence the management of indigenous groups within conservation strategies, see Patrick C. West and Steven R. Brechin, eds., *Resident Peoples and National Parks: Social Dilemmas and Strategies in International Conservation* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1991).

The convergence of these images of endangerment, wilderness, and progress as applied to indigenous populations helped promote Social Darwinist views of native peoples as "noble savages" who represented an earlier or "more primitive" period of human development.[18] While notions of primitiveness became tied to the creation of racial categories undergirding the eugenic movements of the early twentieth century, they likewise perpetuated the myth that communities isolated from Western contact (like landscapes unaltered by human interference) possessed inherently precious scientific data.[19] This "myth of the primitive" reinforced an obsession in anthropology with identifying scientifically "pure" societies and helped dictate the choice of appropriate field sites well into the mid-twentieth century.[20] As Gruber suggests, it also allowed justifications for salvage work to persist long after anthropology had moved past its disciplinary origins within museums of natural history.[21]

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[18] For a survey of the prevalence of ideas about the "noble savage" and the "primitive" in American anthropology, see Don D. Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology: Science and Romanticism in the American Southwest, 1846*-1930 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press) and Curtis M. Hinsley, Jr., *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology, 1846-1910* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981). These ideas were in turn influenced by notions of "primitiveness" associated with the development of academic anthropology in the British context during the late-nineteenth century. For more, see George W. Stocking, Jr., *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press Collier Macmillan, 1987), and Henrika Kuklick, *The Savage Within: The Social History of British Anthropology, 1885-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[19] A considerable amount of literature has dealt with the role of anthropology in promoting eugenic ideals and the construction of racial categories. The classic treatment of this subject is Lee D. Baker, *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). For an analysis with closer ties to early twentieth century conservation efforts, see Jonathan Spiro, *Defending the Master Race: Conservation, Eugenics, and the Legacy of Madison Grant* (Burlington, VT: University of Vermont Press, 2009). See also related essays in Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[20] For more direct critiques of the "myth of the primitive" see Stanley Diamond, *In Search of the Primitive: A Critique of Civilization* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1974), and especially Adam Kuper, *The Reinvention of Primitive Society: Transformations of a Myth* (London: Routledge, 2005).

[21] The standard narrative of anthropology's development in the United States outlines its gradual transition from being a museum-based discipline to one positioned in the field and the university. Under the leadership of father of American anthropology, Franz Boas, the discipline shifted away from the random documentation of cultural groups to the formation and testing of social theories supported by the collection of ethnographic data. Regna Darnell, *Along Came Boas: Continuity and Revolution in Americanist Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Johns Benjamins Publishing Company, 1998). For a comparable treatment of

Gruber's indictment of salvage anthropology, however, ignores the extent to which ideas of "salvage" reflected the anxieties not only of anthropologists at the turn of the century, but those of the postwar period.[22] In her work on the Human Adaptability arm of the International Biological Program, Joanna Radin has argued how the tradition of salvage became "mutated" to meet the needs of the atomic age. Specifically, she explores how the collection and permanent storage of blood and human tissue in freezers from so-called "primitive" societies offered a means for population geneticists to anticipate and manage the risks awaiting future generations.[23] Their efforts, she suggests, relied on an "epistemology of preservation" predicated on the idea that these biological samples contained "as yet unknown" clues essential for human survival.[24]

More recently, Radin and a group of like-minded scholars interested in questions of uncertainty and risk have contributed to an edited volume that has begun to connect the disparate threads surrounding topics like anthropological salvage and environmental conservation. Edited by Fernando Vidal and Nélia Dias, this volume characterizes these endeavors as part of a shared "endangerment sensibility" that cut across the human and life sciences following World War II.[25] Throughout their introduction to the volume, Vidal and Dias offer a complicated assessment of what this endangerment sensibility entails, linking it to political and moral as well as scientific arguments calling for the protection of those entities perceived to be endangered. Key to their discussion is an

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anthropology in the British context, see Adam Kuper, *Anthropologists and Anthropology: The British School, 1922-1972* (New York: Pica Press, 1973).

[22] It is perhaps revealing that based on Google Ngram, the terms "salvage anthropology" and "salvage ethnography" do not seem to appear until 1969, a date which corresponds with the publication of Gruber's article.

[23] Radin, "Life on Ice," 5.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Fernando Vidal and Nélia Dias, "Introduction: The Endangerment Sensibility," in *Endangerment, Biodiversity and Culture*, Fernando and Nélia Dias, ed. (London: Routledge, 2016), 1-38.

effort to identify the framework through which concepts such as "nature" and "culture"—once seen as diametrically opposed—have been tied together through modern-day understandings of biodiversity and its implications for conservation efforts *and* indigenous advocacy.[26] This framework, they argue, relied on the development of international networks that reframed concepts of risk according to new geographic and temporal scales.

The increased interconnectedness of the world after World War II brought about a renewed need to take stock of cultural and biological diversity. It also intensified earlier notions of what it meant for something to be "at risk," elevating the possible extinction of a species or the depletion of a natural resource from something "threatened" to the status of global crisis.[27] The endangerment sensibility, then, is rooted in the idea that human survival can only be sustained by preventing further damage to the diversity of natural and cultural resources. In their words: "The discursive, scientific and political practices related to endangerment are about changing the present for the sake of the future. This future, however, is imagined less as a continuation of the present than as a time in which the present (in the form of currently existing DNA, species, languages or cultures) will no longer be. The endangerment outlook is both proleptic and regretful."[28] As they point out, thinking about endangerment in these terms also accounts for the increased significance of archives as sites both for preserving records for future use and for safeguarding that which has already been preserved.

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[26] They give the example of how the study and documentation of endangered languages has become an accepted part of biodiversity conservation due to the fact that areas seen as possessing the greatest number of endangered languages and those possessing the greatest number of endangered species appear to overlap geographically. See Vidal and Dias, "Introduction," 11.
[27] Vidal and Dias, "Introduction," 12-13.
[28] Vidal and Dias, "Introduction," 5.

Rethinking the Role of Museums and Archives in the Postwar Human Sciences

Connecting the development of Smithsonian urgent anthropology to larger conversations surrounding ideas like "endangerment," "survival," and "crisis" may help explain why the program's organizers and supporters conceived of its activities in terms of "urgency" rather than "salvage." It also suggests why the Smithsonian, with its complex of museums and archives, came to be seen as the logical location for organizing and facilitating this kind of work. Although this dissertation ties the beginnings of Smithsonian urgent anthropology directly to Lévi-Strauss's 1965 speech, his was not the only, nor was it the first, call for increased international research in anthropology during the postwar period. In 1952, Austrian archaeologist, ethnologist, and art historian Robert Heine-Geldern gave his own "S.O.S. of Ethnology" before the 4th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in Vienna.[29] His speech similarly presented the documentation of disappearing cultures as an urgent matter and called for support from existing research institutes, universities, and museums to help direct such an endeavor.[30]

His plea caught the attention of two funding agencies important for anthropological work: the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (established as the Viking Fund in 1941 and discussed in more detail in chapter three) and the United Nationa Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Shortly after Heine-Geldern's speech, Paul Fejos, Director of the fledgling Wenner-Gren

[29] Robert von Heine-Geldern, "S.O.S. of Ethnology," *Actes due IVe Congres International des Sciences Anthropologiques et Ethnologiques, Vienne, 1952*, 3 (1956): 261-272. Although an important figure in his field (especially on archaeology and art forms in Southeast Asia), no complete biography on Heine-Geldern exists. For brief biographical sketches, see Erika Kaneko, "Robert von Heine-Geldern: 1885-1968," *Asian Perspectives* 13 (1970): 1-10, and, Vinigi L. Grottanelli, "Robert Heine-Geldern's Contribution to Historical Ethnology," *Current Anthropology* 10 (Oct. 1969): 374-376.
[30] Heine-Geldern, "An S.O.S. of Ethnology," 270-271.

Foundation, extended his recognition and promised future funding in support of Heine-Geldern's aims. In 1956, UNESCO offered Heine-Geldern financial assistance to print the *Bulletin of the International Committee on Urgent Anthropological and Ethnological Research*, which was managed by Heine-Geldern until his death in 1968.[31] These gestures are significant, since they first brought awareness of efforts to organize an international effort in urgent anthropology to a global community of anthropologists.

Yet while Wenner-Gren and UNESCO could assist with identifying and publicizing urgent projects, they lacked the infrastructure needed to both permanently safeguard collected material from so-called disappearing cultures and to make it accessible for future use by the anthropological community. For this task, the supporters of urgent anthropological research needed an archive, few of which existed in Europe with the available capacity or resources needed to accommodate what promised to be a huge quantity of anthropological data. Conveniently, the potential for such an archive did exist in Washington, D.C. as part of the Smithsonian's Bureau of American Ethnology—an entity physically and methodologically distinct from the Department of Anthropology.

In fact, despite urgent anthropology's initial conceptualization within a European context, in many ways it more closely resembled an intellectual successor to the Bureau. Established in 1879 by Congress as a semi-autonomous program within the Smithsonian Institution, the Bureau of American Ethnology continued the anthropological investigations carried out as part of a series of geological and geographic surveys

[31] Anna Hohenwart-Gerlachstein, "The International Committee on Urgent Anthropological and Ethnological Research," *Current Anthropology* 10 (Oct. 1969): 376.

conducted in the Rocky Mountain region from 1867-1874.[32] Under the direction of geologist-explorer John Wesley Powell (who had previously managed the ethnographic research component of the surveys), the Bureau set out to collect information and cultural data from Native American tribes living in the region.[33] This activity served both a "basic" and "applied" function, as it simultaneously contributed to U.S. policy concerns about the management of Native Americans and created a space for the development of American anthropology as a legitimate field of study.[34] Though Powell justified the Bureau's creation by highlighting its practical use, his investment in the systematic documentation of native peoples largely stemmed from his interest in the cultural and social evolutionary theories of thinkers like Lewis Henry Morgan and Herbert Spencer.[35] For him, the study of Native Americans promised basic scientific insights on a lower phase of human social development. Unchecked westward expansion, however, threatened the long-term availability of data from humans still seen as representing the "primitive stages" of their evolution.[36] In his view, the Bureau therefore had a responsibility to salvage a permanent record of the vanishing languages and habits of these societies before it was too late.

When Powell died in September 1902, however, the Bureau steered away from his salvage directive and concentrated on collecting and applying ethnographic data to

[32] These were consolidated as the U.S. Geological Survey, also in 1879. For extended discussion, see A. Hunter Dupree, "The Geological Survey, 1867-1894," in *Science in the Federal Government: A History of Policies and Activities* (Baltimore The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1957), 195-214.
[33] See Hinsley and Dupree.
[34] My use of the terms "basic" and "applied" work in anthropology suggests a somewhat different interpretation than has been used to describe innovations in the physical sciences and their application to developing technologies. See, for example, the discussions included in the September 2012 issue of *Isis*, especially Jennifer Karns Alexander, "Thinking Again about Science in Technology," *Isis* 3 (Sept. 2012): 518-526.
[35] Curtis M. Hinsley, Jr., "Anthropology as Science and Politics," in Walter Goldschmidt, ed., *The Uses of* Anthropology (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1979), 21.
[36] J.W. Powell, *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1881), xiv.

projects with more concrete objectives. These included the publication of the *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico* in 1907, which Smithsonian Secretary Samuel Langley hoped would prove beneficial to federal officials working with Native American communities. During the war years, the Bureau also contributed its expertise to more "applied" pursuits through projects like the Institute of Social Anthropology, the Ethnogeographic Board, and the River Basin Surveys.[37] These kinds of programs helped differentiate the Bureau's research interests from those of the curators constructing exhibits within the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History, a distinction that would later generate tension following the merger of the Bureau with the Department in 1964.

I suggest that the Bureau's earlier pursuit of both basic salvage and applied research created a space within the Smithsonian's structure where a program like urgent anthropology could take shape and carry out similar kinds of work. At the same time, urgent anthropology's development depended equally upon the Institution's expansion as a museum complex, as it provided the necessary combination of space, resources, and disciplinary flexibility to host an innovative program bridging the human and natural sciences. Thus although the roots of urgent anthropology as a postwar international salvage effort may have been conceived outside of the United States, its execution relied heavily upon access to reliable funding sources, personnel, and the availability of a functional repository—things purported to exist at the Smithsonian. What could not have been accounted for at the time of the program's development was the extent to which changing understandings about the purpose of anthropology—both within and outside the Institution—would affect the program's ability to actually fulfill its mission.

[37] For more detail, see Frank H. H. Roberts, "One Hundred Years of Smithsonian Anthropology," *Science* 104 (Aug. 1946): 119-1235, as well as the program descriptions included in Woodbury and Woodbury and Judd.

This brings me back to the question of urgency and the role of museums and archives. Returning briefly to Vidal's and Dias's definition of the "endangerment sensibility," it is clear that Smithsonian urgent anthropology, as a program created to document and preserve records of cultural diversity for future use, meets their criteria. Yet just as the term "urgent" came to suggest different research priorities for different groups of people, the results of this work also promised a variety of applications. For both Ripley and Tax, their focus on public education—be it through conferences, publications, or instructive museum exhibits—is what sets urgent anthropology apart from other kinds of salvage work.

Additionally, urgent anthropology's organizational and intellectual foundation within the Smithsonian's museum complex helps distinguish it from other global initiatives seeking to utilize anthropological data. Unlike contemporaneous modernization and development projects sponsored by groups like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) or the World Health Organization (WHO), urgent anthropology—as a part of the Smithsonian Institution—ultimately supported its mission to "increase and diffuse knowledge" for the benefit of humankind.[38] The collection and storage of records documenting the radical transformations occurring within societies around the world *for its own sake*, and not as part of a pre-determined social or economic aid project, likewise made the ideas behind urgent anthropology adaptable to the needs and interests of a growing community of anthropologists and sociologists in developing parts of the world. For these scholars, the study of culture

[38] The literature on anthropology and its role in postwar development projects is immense. For an introduction, see Katy Gardner and David Lewis, eds., *Anthropology, Development and the Post-Modern Challenge* (London: Pluto Press, 1996). For a more general treatment of modernization theory, see David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark H. Haefele, and Michael E. Latham, eds., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003).

change, both abroad and within their own countries, promised a means to understand and respond to what was happening around them. The ability of urgent anthropology to represent and reflect on topics of pressing concern also made it a useful lens through which anthropology could assess and reconceive its disciplinary interests and methods. In short, the study of anthropology, both in its changing state and ability to comment on changing states, became a subject of urgent discussion.

Joanna Radin has argued that the process of freezing human samples of blood and biological tissues during the International Biological Program helped preserve their *latent potential* for scientific work. In other words, these samples have since become valuable in ways unanticipated at the time of their collection.[39] As she points out, in addition to their uses for modern-day genetic and medical research, many of these samples have since become included in the efforts of indigenous advocacy groups seeking to regain authority over who has the right to access and use materials taken from their ancestors and to what end.[40]

Extending her ideas of latency to the multifaceted objectives of urgent anthropology helps explain why the production of cinematic records of so-called disappearing cultures came to be seen as the best strategy for pursuing urgent research. As part of the Smithsonian's program in urgent anthropology, in 1975 the Institution established the National Anthropological Film Center to organize the production and archiving of ethnographic film. Directed by filmmaker Richard Sorenson, the Film Center adopted an objective approach to the creation of what he called "research film documents." According to him, the ability of film to record both the intended subject

[39] Joanna Radin, "Latent Life: Concepts and Practices of Human Tissue Preservation in the International Biological Program," *Social Studies of Science* 43 (2013): 495-596.
[40] Ibid., 500.

matter of the filmmaker as well as unintended visual data within the same footage made it a valuable resource for practitioners working across a number of different scientific fields, including anthropology, psychology, medicine, and ecology. The research films created under Sorenson during the Center's early years still exist, now as part of the vast collection of anthropological footage assembled in the Smithsonian's Human Studies Film Archives. Because of the particular framework in which they were created, it is possible that these films may still hold latent potential for researchers working across the human and environmental sciences. Recent discussions in both scientific and popular literature about climate change and the need to define the "Anthropocene" as a new geological era accounting for the impact of human beings on the natural environment suggests that the work of urgent anthropologists and the resulting records preserved in the Smithsonian's archives might still hold clues for ensuring the future of human survival.[41]

[41] For scientific justifications for the "Anthropocene" as a new geological era, see Jan Zalasiewicz, Mark Williams, Alan Haywood, and Michael Ellis, "The Anthropocene: A New Epoch of Geological Time?" *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* 369 (Jan. 2011): 835-841. For discussions of climate change and speculations about the outcome of continued environmental neglect, see Elizabeth Kolbert, *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (New York: Picador, 2014), and Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, *The Collapse of Western Civilization: A View from the Future* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

CHAPTER TWO

A Rare Bird:

S. Dillon Ripley and the Bridging of Anthropology and Ecology

> The most critical problem facing humanity today is an ecological one of relating human societies harmoniously to their environments. Before conditions caused by radioactive fallout, pollution, exploding populations, the greenhouse effect of increased atmospheric carbon dioxide, and intersocietal aggression can be treated, the knowledge of the humanities and the behavioral sciences, as well as the natural sciences, must be integrated.
>
> —S. Dillon Ripley and Helmut K. Buechner, "Ecosystem Science as a Point of Synthesis," 1966.[42]

Introduction

This chapter explores the development of the holistic ecological thinking of Sidney Dillon Ripley, ornithologist and eighth Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. It suggests that as a result of his experiences traveling abroad and working in museums of natural history, he came to view ecology as a field integrating perspectives from the human and biological sciences. Specifically, it considers how his exposure to cultures living outside of the United States during his early life and career instilled in him a profound understanding of the place of human beings as part of, and not separate from, their natural environment. It also gave him a firm appreciation for the work of anthropologists as the scientists best suited to make sense of the social and cultural mechanisms underlying human/environment interactions. Through his role as a leading figure in the emerging environmental movement, he argued that conservation efforts and the management of ecosystems thus relied on bridging research in anthropology and

[42] S. Dillon Ripley and Helmut K. Buechner, "Ecosystem Science as a Point of Synthesis," *Daedalus* 96 (Fall 1967): 1192.

ecology. He contended that such collaborative work could best be achieved in museums, which, according to him, contained a balance of scientific authority, financial resources, and disciplinary flexibility not found in other institutions or in universities. The chapter concludes by showing how the elaboration of his ideas about the importance of museums for supporting interdisciplinary research came to form his core agenda to establish a museum-based approach to human ecology following his 1964 election as Smithsonian Secretary. By concentrating on Ripley's thinking about the relationships between anthropology, ecology, and museums, this chapter ultimately considers why the Smithsonian became the ideal location for facilitating a program in urgent anthropology and establishes an essential foundation for the remaining parts of this dissertation.

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In 1960, ornithologist Dillon Ripley, accompanied by his wife, Mary Livingston, and their three young daughters, set out for a collecting expedition in the mountains of Papua New Guinea. It was not the first time Ripley had traveled to this part of the world, nor would it be the last. During this particular visit, however, the Ripleys traveled to the Ilaga Valley nestled in the island's central highlands, where they hoped to find rare bird specimens to add to the collections of the Peabody Museum in New Haven, Connecticut. While the valley turned out to be heavily deforested and therefore lacking in bird life, they did find several villages occupied by the Dani and Uhunduni people indigenous to the region. Recounting this episode in an oral history recorded later in his life, Ripley took the opportunity to discuss the customs and politics of the community at great length, ending his long exposition by noting that he and his wife were "fascinated by these people, almost as fascinated as we were by the birds that we were finding during that

time."[43] Why would a "birdman" (as one author calls him) be so interested in the indigenous people of Papua New Guinea?[44] Although one could attribute his reaction to simple curiosity and fond memories of travel, to do so would be only partially correct. In the following sections, I highlight how throughout his early life and career Ripley habitually expressed sympathies toward the customs and behaviors of indigenous peoples, and, in turn, the anthropologists who studied them.

Early Days: Travels Abroad

Sidney Dillon Ripley was born in Litchfield, Connecticut on September 20, 1913, the youngest of two sisters and two brothers. His great-grandfather and namesake, Sidney Dillon, served as President of the Union Pacific Railroad and is best remembered for his participation in laying down the final rail of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869.[45] As a result of his great-grandfather's financial investments, Ripley was born into a well-to-do family and enjoyed the privileges of growing up a wealthy child in New York City. Some of the benefits of this lifestyle included frequent visits to the city's zoos and museums, as well as enrollment in a Montessori kindergarten program, where he adopted learning habits that encouraged "looking, feeling, examining, and handling objects" as opposed to simply reading about them in books.[46] Yet despite his family's financial

[43] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, July 5, 1983, interview 21, transcript, Record Unit 9591, Oral history interviews with S. Dillon Ripley 1977-1993, Smithsonian Institution Archives (SIA), Washington, D.C.
[44] Larry Van Dyne, "Dillon Ripley: Bird Man, Empire Builder, Charming Seducer, Patrician, Arrogant, Brilliant, Conspicuously Successful Keeper of the Nation's Attic," *The Washingtonian* 15 (Dec. 1979): 139.
[45] Bruce M. Beehler, Roger F. Pasquier, and Warren B. King, "In Memoriam: S. Dillon Ripley, 1913-2001," *The Auk* 119 (Oct. 2002): 1110.
[46] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, June 24, 1977, interview 1, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA. As historian Neil Harris notes, it is possible that these early learning experiences helped Ripley develop a preference for the kind of hands-on learning that would later influence his fondness for museums.

security and high standing in New York society, in 1918 Ripley's parents divorced. Left alone to raise Ripley and his three siblings, his mother decided to move the family back to New England, where they settled first in Cambridge and then in Boston.[47] Distracted by thoughts of his absent father and alienated from the other boys at his new school, Ripley found solace in weekly bird walks organized by the rector at the local Episcopal Church. These walks, he recalled, "left an indelible impression on me, and I suppose started me off on my interest in birds."[48] Eager to maintain this hobby, he soon became the chairman of the birdbath committee at school, making sure that the large basin remained clean and filled with fresh water for his new feathered friends.

While this anecdote offers a convenient starting point for contextualizing his scientific work on birds, Ripley's path to ornithology was not yet set in stone. In 1927, at the invitation of a family friend, his mother decided to take her children on a trip to India. Although seasoned travelers (the family had spent previous summers in Europe playing in the Tuileries Gardens in Paris and visiting innumerable art galleries and cathedrals in cities including Florence and Vienna), India proved to be a new experience altogether.[49] Upon approaching Bombay (now Mumbai), Ripley remembered feeling overwhelmed by the onslaught of new sensations that "came over us like a tremendous sort of spell."[50] As he later implied, this spell had a lasting effect on him, since throughout his life he referred to India as a kind of second homeland and frequently credited this first trip with

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See Neil Harris, "The Secretary Arrives: Dillon Ripley and the Smithsonian Challenge," *Capital Culture: J. Carter Brown, the National Gallery of Art, and the Reinvention of the Museum Experience* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 97.

[47] Ripley, interview 1.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ripley recounts his early travels to Europe in the concluding section of his book, *The Sacred Grove*. See Dillon Ripley, *The Sacred Grove: Essays on Museums* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1969), 140-143.

[50] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, September 30, 1977, interview 2, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.

bringing out a "confirmed interest in natural history."[51] Other recollections from this trip, however, complicate its causal connection to his eventual career in ornithology: "In general, we noticed the wild life…but in India I don't really remember being as excited about bird life as I became later. Although I was interested in game animals and the sorts of things my brother shot, like the tiger, sheep, and ibex, I have very dim memories of really being interested in wildlife at the time."[52] In fact, other memories of the trip reveal that Ripley's main preoccupation during that time may have rested elsewhere. Another anecdote shows how at one point during the family's travels Ripley insisted they stop in the city of Lahore, since it had been one of the major conquests of Alexander the Great during his 326 B.C. campaign. As result of the Greek presence introduced to the region, Lahore became an important confluence of Greco-Buddhist sculptures and terra cotta and a must-see for Ripley. It seems that the young naturalist's first love was not birds, but rather the remnants of ancient cultures.[53] "For a while I had been leaning towards archaeology," he admitted, "but visits to the Boston and the New York Museums of Natural History, and of course the New York zoos in Central Park and the Bronx, had gradually begun to leave their mark."[54]

In addition to learning about the region's people and history through museums and cultural sites throughout India, Ripley and his family spent six weeks exploring remote parts of nearby Tibet and Ladakh. During this excursion they visited a number of Buddhist temples and were fortunate to witness a rare ceremony at a Hemis monastery

[51] Ripley, *The Sacred Grove*, 18.
[52] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, January 3, 1978, interview 4, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[53] Ripley, *The Sacred Grove*, 144.
[54] Ibid., 144-145.

that took place only once every twenty-one years.[55] Though at thirteen years old Ripley may not have fully understood the significance and rarity of this event, his appreciation for the colorful masks and dancers made an impression nonetheless. Unbeknownst to him at the time, he would encounter these masks again in 1934 during his sophomore year at Yale hanging in the office of one his future mentors and colleagues, limnologist G. Evelyn Hutchinson.[56] The masks eventually came to symbolize a kind of shared understanding between the two men about the cultural and environmental diversity of Southeast Asia and its unique role in addressing larger questions about ecology and conservation.

As other scholars note, Ripley's early experiences in India helped cultivate his appreciation for nature and his future investment in environmental biodiversity.[57] He himself acknowledged the trip's formative influence in a 1975 talk given before the Associate Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India in New Delhi, commenting:

> That first trip, of some six months, was a revelation to a small boy, and marked a turning point in my life. From the plains to the higher hills of the western Himalayas in Ladakh, my wandering footsteps brought me along a way of understanding, if not true enlightenment. My eyes were opened to the variety and

[55] Ripley, interview 4.

[56] Ripley recalled his surprise at seeing the masks during his first meeting with Hutchinson, which he recounts in the final chapter of Hutchinson's 1972 Festschrift. See Dillon Ripley, "Afterword: On First Entering Evelyn's Laboratory," in *Growth by Intussusception: Ecological Essays in Honor of G. Evelyn Hutchinson* (New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1972), 439-441. See also the chapter on the Yale North India Expedition included in Nancy G. Slack, *G. Evelyn Hutchinson and the Invention of Modern Ecology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 100-114.

[57] While there is no comprehensive biography available on Ripley, recent monographs dealing with particular aspects of his life and career all identify the significance of his time in India. See Michael L. Lewis, "The Gateway to India: Sálim Ali, S. Dillon Ripley, and the Introduction of the New Ecology to India," *Inventing Global Ecology: Tracking the Biodiversity Ideal in India, 1947-1997* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004), 25-53, Neil Harris, "The Secretary Arrives: Dillon Ripley and the Smithsonian Challenge," *Capital Culture: J. Carter Brown, the National Gallery of Art, and the Reinvention of the Museum Experience* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 95-127, and William S. Walker, "A Family of Humankind: The Making and Unmaking of a Museum of Man at the Smithsonian," *A Living Exhibition: The Smithsonian and the Transformation of the Universal Museum* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014), 196-226.

> richness of life and the subsequent direction of my interest in science, research, and philosophical speculation.[58]

From this passage, it is clear that India's collective uniqueness and diversity inspired Ripley's later scientific thinking. Yet taking into account his other memories from the trip, I suggest that the country's cultural landmarks and traditional customs shaped many of his lasting affections for the region, perhaps even more so than his observations of its different plants and animals. In other words, if one is to take this trip's influence on Ripley's future ecological thinking seriously, it is important to note that even from an early age, he considered human beings as part of the total landscape and not removed from it. Thus while it is true that India may have inspired his later work in ornithology, it is equally likely that it helped foster early sympathies and interests in the study of indigenous societies.

The Path to Birds

Although Ripley continued to participate in bird walks after his return from India and even set up a waterfowl pond on the family estate while in high school, his official entry into ornithology was a slow process. Moreover, Ripley had always considered his bird watching as more of a "very consuming kind of hobby" and entered Yale as an undergraduate in 1932 intent on studying international law and history.[59] Perhaps his trip around the world and his exposure to different cultures had made him more interested in the arts and in foreign affairs than in biology. While Ripley spent most of his freshman year juggling coursework and participating in extracurricular activities such as theater

[58] S. Dillon Ripley, *The Paradox of the Human Condition: A Scientific and Philosophic Exposition of the Environmental and Ecological Problems that Face Humanity* (India: Tate McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, Ltd., 1975), 3-4.
[59] Ripley, interview 4.

and debate, his fondness for museums prompted him to pay a visit to the Peabody Museum of Natural History. There he met Head Curator Stanley C. Ball, who found Ripley's amateur knowledge of birds so impressive that he enlisted him in helping with some of the museum's exhibits. Ball and his assistant, Ralph Morril, taught Ripley how to skin and mount bird specimens, an activity that he often carried out in the privacy of his single dorm room.[60] This new skill, however, did not earn him many admirers outside of the Museum, as he discovered that ornithology was "almost unknown at Yale as an interest in those days."[61] The only other person who shared Ripley's enthusiasm was Leonard Sanford, a surgeon at the medical school and, incidentally, one of the trustees of the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York.[62] In this capacity, Sanford helped build the museum's ornithological holdings by purchasing collections (including the massive Whitney and Rothschild Collections) and funding expeditions to gather new specimens. He also raised money to build a new Bird Hall in the museum and helped establish its Department of Ornithology as one of the premier centers for global research on birds.[63] Despite Sanford's patronage of the discipline, he discouraged Ripley from pursuing his hobby as a career, warning him that only two uncharted areas remained for "bird explorers" looking to coin new species: New Guinea and Sumatra.[64]

Ripley's prospects in ornithology were also curbed by a disappointing attempt at taking biology during his sophomore year (he found the professor disagreeable), after

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[60] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, March 6, 1978, interview 5, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[61] Ibid.
[62] For a brief biographical sketch on Sanford, see R.C. Murphy, "Leonard Cutler Sanford," *The Auk* 68 (July 1951): 409-410.
[63] Historian Jürgen Haffer describes Sanford as a "manager" of large-scale ornithological projects during the period and an important figure in the life and career of German ornithologist Ernst Mayr. See Jürgen Haffer, *Ornithology, Evolution, and Philosophy: The Life and Science of Ernst Mayr, 1904-2005* (Essen, Germany: Springer-Verlag, 2007), 98-102.
[64] Haffer, *Ornithology, Evolution, and Philosophy*, 98-102.

which he returned to courses in history, literature, foreign affairs, and economics. He finally graduated in 1936 with a degree in history and thoughts of breaking into New York's theater scene.[65] But graduating in the midst of the Depression made his plan to go into theater a financial impossibility and his family pushed him to pursue a stable career in law as he had initially proposed.[66] Ripley's prior enthusiasm for law, however, had begun to wane. "It was about that time I fell back on what was one of my dominant interests, namely birds," he later remarked:

> I thought so long as I didn't have any real prospects of family intervention to protect me and push me into a cushy job, so long as I didn't have any real motivation to go to law school…I might just as well fall back on biology or zoology, convinced that I would never really be able to earn a decent living, but at least I'd be happy doing what I felt comfortable with, namely studying zoology and nature.[67]

That fall, he enrolled as a graduate student in Columbia's biology department, but quickly found himself behind the other students due to his lack of scientific training as an undergraduate. Determined, Ripley studied hard, working long nights and carrying briefcases filled with textbooks back and forth with him during his commute on the subway.[68] He also supplemented his university education with volunteer work at the American Museum of Natural History (thanks to his connection with Leonard Sanford), where he worked on processing the newly-acquired Rothschild Collection alongside his soon-to-be-mentor, ornithologist Ernst Mayr.

Ripley was not at Columbia for long, however, before a more appealing job opportunity came along. In November 1936, Charis Denison Crockett, the daughter of a family friend from Litchfield, Connecticut, contacted Ripley to see if he might

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[65] Ripley, interview 5.
[66] Larry Van Dyne, "Dillon Ripley," 208.
[67] Ripley, interview 5.
[68] Ibid.

accompany her and her husband on a trip to Papua New Guinea. Crockett, an anthropology doctoral student working with Earnest Hooton at Harvard, hoped to follow in the footsteps of other women anthropologists, such as Margaret Mead and Beatrice Blackwood, by conducting fieldwork and anthropometric measurements on native peoples living in New Guinea and the neighboring islands in the Pacific.[69] For this purpose, Charis bought a fifty-nine foot schooner called the *Chiva* with the help of her new husband and intended to sail with him to the Pacific in order to complete her dissertation work. Her expedition attracted the attention of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, which agreed to sponsor the trip on the condition that the couple bring along a naturalist to gather specimens of birds and other animals for the Academy's collections.[70] Through the familial grapevine, Charis discovered that Ripley was working on a degree in zoology and asked if he would be interested in the job. Frustrated with his graduate coursework, Ripley jumped at the opportunity and spent the next two months preparing for the trip by reviewing lists of New Guinea birds with Mayr at AMNH. Mayr, who had also spent time studying birds in New Guinea early in his career, eagerly supported Ripley's upcoming adventure.[71] "After all," Mayr told him, "you cannot get to New Guinea every day. Graduate work will still be waiting for you when you come back, and then, too, you will be better prepared for it."[72] Mayr's investment in Ripley's trip to New Guinea helped confirm his role as one of his most influential mentors and teachers. As historian Michael Lewis notes, this relationship with

[69] Ripley, interview 5.
[70] Ripley outlines the specifics of the trip in the introduction of his memoir about his time onboard the *Chiva*, See Dillon Ripley, *Trail of the Money Bird: 30,000 Miles of Adventure with a Naturalist* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1940), xi.
[71] Jürgen Haffer's biography of Mayr includes substantial detail on his expeditions to New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. See Haffer, *Ornithology, Evolution, and Philosophy*, 48-91.
[72] As remembered by Ripley in *Trail of the Money Bird*, xii.

Mayr provided an important foundation for Ripley's approach to studying birds, since through Mayr he learned the latest theories in ornithology (especially those coming from Germany) and through exposure adopted much of Mayr's own thinking about geographic speciation and systematics.[73] His work processing museum collections with Mayr also helped ground his scientific methods firmly in traditional taxonomy.[74]

In December 1936, Ripley left Philadelphia on the first of two consecutive National Academy-sponsored expeditions to collect new species of birds in the South Pacific. The first, as mentioned, was the Denison-Crockett venture to New Guinea. The second, undertaken in 1938, took Ripley to the islands and mainland of Sumatra. These two trips had several important consequences for the development of Ripley's career in ornithology. First, they gave him access to the two places identified years earlier by Leonard Sanford as the final frontiers for locating new species of birds. Second, the trips rekindled his love for Asia and the South Pacific and cemented his status as one of the few experts of the region. Finally, these trips demonstrated the extent of Ripley's skills as a naturalist and legitimized his decision to go to graduate school for zoology instead of law. Consequently, they resulted in the collection of many of the specimens that Ripley would use for his dissertation research on speciation in Sumatra.[75]

While the trips had an immediate effect on Ripley's future career in ornithology, they also reinforced his childhood fascination with the customs and ways of life of other

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[73] Michael Lewis emphasizes Mayr's connections to Erwin Stresemann, who served as Mayr's graduate advisor at the University of Berlin and instilled in Mayr his views on speciation and biogeography. See Lewis, *Inventing Global Ecology*, 44. Mayr would later incorporate Stressemen's work into his own explanations of evolutionary biology as articulated through his contributions to the modern evolutionary synthesis in the 1940s. See Tom Birkhead, Jo Wimpenny, and Bob Montgomerie, Chapter Three, "Birds on the Tree of Life," *Ten Thousand Birds* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 75-116.

[74] Mark Borrow details the taxonomic tradition of American ornithology in his book, *A Passion for Birds: American Ornithology after Audubon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

[75] Ripley's dissertation was published as S. Dillon Ripley, "Bird Fauna of the West Sumatra Islands," *Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard* 94 (1944): 307-437.

cultures. Throughout the pages of his 1942 memoir, *Trail of the Money Bird*, Ripley regales the reader with detailed descriptions of the many exotic locations and people he experienced while on board the *Chiva*. As one biographer suggests, the book chronicles "a young man's adventure—tramping through jungles and mountains, confronting malaria and primitive tribesmen."[76] While it is true that the book's prose is written in a manner meant to appeal to popular readers (with the result that many of Ripley's descriptions of indigenous people contain sensationalist and often paternalistic overtones), it conveys his sympathies for the fate of those tribes whose ways of life were in jeopardy. For example, in several places in the book, Ripley discusses the situation of the Arafura people living on the island of Misool in Indonesia. During a conversation with the island's Raja, he discovered that because of changes in trade regulation enforced by the Dutch between the island's inhabitants and merchants from China, there was a shortage of the Ming Dynasty porcelain plates that traditionally had served as a crucial component of a young Arafura woman's dowry. As a result of this shortage and because of the strictness of Arafura marriage laws, fewer Arafura were marrying, which in turn led to a decrease in their total population.[77] Although Ripley commented on the tribe's strange behaviors, he nonetheless referred to his short stay in Misool as a missed opportunity and noted that "some day the Arafuras will be extinct and Tip and the gardens will be jungle again, and the buried Ming plates will disappear forever. The last Arafura will have gone from the face of Misool and the tinkling voices will be stilled."[78]

Later in his career, Ripley recalled another example of a culture undergoing change. During a brief stop in Bali, he became fascinated by the creativity and art of the

[76] Van Dyne, "Dillon Ripley," 208.
[77] Ripley, *Trail of the Money Bird*, 125.
[78] Ibid., 127.

indigenous Balinese people, whose traditional Hindu rituals were slowly being altered through increased interaction with the Muslim Javanese. What impressed Ripley most about this group was their attention to preserving their craft: "Everyone from the simplest farmer to the simplest tradesman right on through to the large land owning hereditary castes in Bali had some kind of art at their fingertips," he recalled.[79] Ripley recognized that these crafts and artistic representations acted as "monuments" of an older tradition that the community actively and habitually recreated in order to maintain their own customs within the island's changing cultural landscape:

> It wasn't as if they merely revered the monuments of a thousand years ago and looked at them in awe or with neglect, as in Indochina. Rather, as the monument was destroyed in the course of natural change in twenty-five years, they had to create new monuments…So the traditional crafts never were abandoned or lost through neglect.[80]

Although never stated explicitly, it is probable that Ripley's exposure to cultures such as the Arafura and Balinese reignited his childhood fascination with the lifestyles of non-Western peoples. This also comes across in his scholarly publications in ornithology, several of which included photographs of native peoples (Figure 2.1). One of these featured over twenty images of local people and their crafts without including a single

[79] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, December 27, 1978, interview 8, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[80] Ibid.

photograph of birds or other wildlife (Figure 2.2).[81]

Figure 2.1. An early example of Ripley's anthropological photographs, as included in his published dissertation. S. Dillon Ripley, "Bird Fauna of the West Sumatra Islands," *Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard* 94 (1944): 137.

[81] S. Dillon Ripley, "Roaming India's Naga Hills: Friendly Tribesmen, Strange Birds and Animals, and Occasional Headhunters Inhabit the Rugged Assam-Burma Borderland," *National Geographic Magazine* 107 (1955): 247-264.

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↑ Angamis Leap in the War Dance of Naga Hills Head-hunters

Along the border of India and Burma lie the high, mist-shrouded hills of Naga. There a score of tribes live as their remote ancestors did; the 20th century barely touches them.

Only yesterday tribe fought tribe for the gruesome war prize of human heads. Raids continue even now in frontier districts beyond control of the Indian Government. To the Naga, a severed head means more than an enemy slain; a head gives prosperity and "soul force."

These boys of the Baptist Mission School at Phakekedzumi wear the hand-woven baldrics and kilts of the Eastern Angami tribe. Dancing like their warrior fathers, they make spectacular jumps and cross their legs in mid-air, not unlike members of a ballet corps.

→A necklace of bone and carnelian bespeaks the wealth of this dancer's family. Pieces of horn separate the strands. Ivory armlets are three-inch-thick sections of elephant tusks. Feathers sprout from the boy's ears.

← Spear and Shield Once Won Heads

Page 248: Dyed goat hair, substituting for human hair, decks this Western Angami's weapon and bearskin-covered bamboo shield. Bands of cowrie shells stripe his black kilt; four rows once meant that the wearer had taken a head. A cast-off army shirt shows modern influence.

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Kodachromes by S. Dillon Ripley

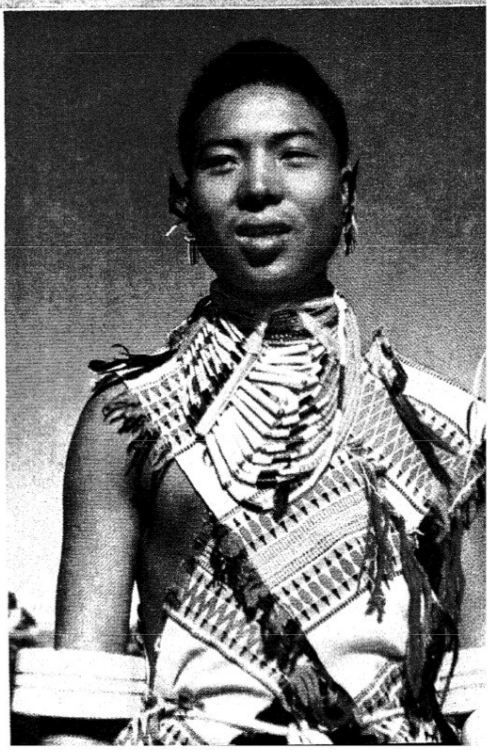

Figure 2.2. A representative page from Ripley's 1955 article in *National Geographic.* S. Dillon Ripley, "Roaming India's Naga Hills: Friendly Tribesmen, Strange Birds and Animals, and Occasional Headhunters Inhabit the Rugged Assam-Burma Borderland," *National Geographic Magazine* 107 (1955): 249.

In his review of *Trail of the Money Bird*, even Mayr made note of Ripley's discussions of human cultures, writing that "Ripley does not give us formal scientific descriptions like an expert anthropologist; his tales are rather those of a sympathetic student of human nature."[82] These examples suggest that even early in his career, Ripley paid attention to human beings and their place within the environment, and recognized how external factors such as changing trade or instances of acculturation were altering the behaviors of these communities. In the case of the Balinese, it is also worth emphasizing Ripley's fixation on their method of preserving culture through the recreation of material objects and crafts, since it in some ways reflects his later theories about the role of museums as cultural and scientific databanks, an idea I will return to in chapter 5.

The Museum and the War: Ripley's Entry into Ecology

After three years traveling around the world and a short bout of malaria, in July 1939 Ripley returned to the United States firmly committed to a career in ornithology. Comparing his experiences in the Pacific to those of Mayr and Darwin before him, he later remarked how this trip helped cement his interest in studying evolution. "[T]here is a certain influence of going to certain places in the world where you see rolled out on a map in front of you the evidence of evolution," he noted, "where it's possible then rather rapidly to gain insights into observations which are made of nature—and not in the laboratory—but which tell you something about broad understanding of evolution."[83] In

[82] Ernst Mayr, "The Roamings of a Naturalist in the Far Pacific: Peaceful Travel Among those Islands that War has Made Familiar to All Who Can Read," *The New York Times Book Review* (November 1942): 8.
[83] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, May 18, 1982, interview 18, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.

this statement, Ripley identified two ideas that came to define his thinking about ornithology. First, his mention of "certain places" referred specifically to the study of evolution within island groups, a framework Mayr used to his advantage in his own scientific work. Likely influenced by Mayr's concept of geographic speciation, Ripley was interested in the distribution of birds across a set of islands and the length of time it took isolated groups to evolve into separate species.[84] Second, Ripley's point about the importance of field observation over lab work mirrored Mayr's assertion that learning the behaviors and life histories of birds would yield greater understanding about their movements and evolutionary development than simply studying their physiology in the lab.

Yet despite Ripley's intent to resume his graduate studies, following his return from Sumatra he remained committed to museum work, splitting his time between assisting Mayr with the Rothschild Collection at the American Museum of Natural History in New York and processing his own specimens from the Denison-Crockett and Sumatra expeditions under the guidance of his second mentor, Rodolphe de Schauensee, at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.[85] While in Philadelphia, he became acquainted with Charlie Cadwalader, then president of the Academy of Natural Sciences and a good friend of de Schauensee's. A young man himself, Cadwalader took a liking to Ripley and often brought him along for lunches at the Philadelphia Club, a meeting place for many of the city's brightest minds.[86] During one of these lunches, Cadwalader introduced him to Thomas Barbour, Director of the Museum of Comparative Zoology

[84] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, June 21, 1979, interview 9, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[85] Ripley, interview 9.
[86] Ibid.

(MCZ) at Harvard University. Described by Ripley as a "Medici prince of natural history," Barbour was independently wealthy and upon hearing Ripley's plans to return to graduate school offered him a fellowship to attend Harvard's program in zoology, while also allowing him to work part time at the MCZ.[87] Thanks to this arrangement, Ripley could finally earn his Ph.D. while still maintaining his connection to the museum world.

Ripley returned to Cambridge in September 1940, where he spent two years at Harvard taking courses and working in the museum. During this time, he noticed a bit of tension between the scientific methods endorsed by his classmates and his work at the MCZ. He found that many of his colleagues considered museum work uninteresting and old-fashioned, that it meant being "cooped up in a room with dead, dried specimens laid out in rows and out in cases, and you never went out of doors."[88] His observation supports what historian Mark Barrow cites as a reorientation of Harvard's biology curriculum in the 1930s towards more lab-based subjects such as histology and embryology and a decreased emphasis on the use of collections housed in the museum.[89] The department thus emphasized laboratory investigation during Ripley's graduate training, leaving little room for contributions made in the museum. Reflecting upon his education later in life, Ripley offered a helpful illustration explaining the two separate approaches to biology during the 1930s and '40s:

> Until about 1950 it seemed to me that biologists in general conformed to an impression I had had when I was a graduate student at Harvard: in the biological

[87] For more on Barbour's life and career, see Henry B. Bigelow, "Thomas Barbour, 1884-1946," *National Academy of Science Biographical Memoir* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1952), 11-45.
[88] Ripley, interview 9.
[89] Barrow, *A Passion for Birds,* 186. For more on the history of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, see Mary P. Winsor, *Reading the Shape of Nature: Comparative Zoology at the Agassiz Museum* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

> laboratory if a mouse crawled across the window ledge on the *outside* of the window, no one would look at it because it was not a controlled experiment. This was where most biologists stood. Across the street was the gloomy bulk of the Museum of Comparative Zoology; there if a mouse were to be seen crawling across a window ledge, no one would look at it because it wasn't a specimen. The rest of us who might have looked were somehow outside the main stream, or the then backwater which much of the Museum's activities represented to the main stream.[90]

For Ripley, the answer to this conundrum lay in finding a way to talk about the mouse on the window ledge in a manner that would bridge the interests between those working in the laboratory and those working in the museum. "There seemed to be a gap," he recalled, "not only physically between these two buildings represented by Divinity Avenue which lay between them, but also in the concept and the outlook of these people, both of whom call themselves biologists."[91] By the 1950s, Ripley observed that the introduction of courses in ecology and ethology helped fill this gap by offering an explanation for the mouse's behavior not as outside the laboratory or the museum, but within the context of its environment. Yet during Ripley's graduate years, ecology remained a relatively new science not taught in most universities. In fact, Ripley only had one ecology course at Harvard, which he remembered as being "insufficient, poorly taught, and essentially missing many of the main points."[92] As Michael Lewis notes, Ripley's time at Harvard preceded the introduction of new courses on evolution and ecology brought to the college by his mentor, Ernst Mayr, beginning in 1953.[93]

In early 1942, the death of Joseph Harvey Riley, Assistant Curator of Birds at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, accelerated Ripley's graduate work.

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[90] S. Dillon Ripley, "Views: Conservation Comes of Age: Over the past thirty years biologists have found themselves gradually drawn into an awakening interest in ecology, and through ecology, inevitably emerge into the amphitheater of the pros and cons of conservation," *American Scientist* 50 (Sept.-Oct. 1971): 530.
[91] Ripley, interview 9.
[92] S. Dillon Ripley, "AIBS News: The Smithsonian's Role in U.S. Cultural and Environmental Development," *BioScience* 36 (March 1986): 155.
[93] Lewis, *Inventing Global Ecology*, 45-46.

With the encouragement of his graduate advisors, zoologists Glover Allen, Alfred Romer, and James Peters, Ripley went to Washington D.C. to take the position and to write his dissertation. This arrangement was fortuitous, since at that point the Smithsonian held one of the largest collections of birds from the western islands of Sumatra. This collection supplemented the lists of birds Ripley collected during his 1939 trip and made it possible to fill in gaps in his data without returning to the islands. He completed his dissertation in three months and received his degree in 1943. In his dissertation, Ripley followed Mayr's example by concentrating on the rates of speciation of bird fauna populating the western island groups.[94] Pairing taxonomic and field observation with geographic data, he argued that the island's physical area and relative isolation from the main island of Sumatra determined the number of species on each individual island.[95] Charting the percentage of land area against the number of different species on each island also revealed that the two islands closest to the Sumatra, Banyak and Batu, acted as "stepping stones or funnels" that allowed certain species to colonize the rest of the islands in the group, an argument which supported Mayr's own theories on island hopping in the region.[96]

Based on his dissertation, it seems clear that although Ripley took few classes in ecology and evolution at Harvard, his relationship with Mayr at the American Museum of Natural History influenced his approach to understanding evolution in birds. Similarly, Mayr's commitment to museum work resonated with Ripley's own methods and areas of expertise. Furthermore, Mayr's contribution to the modern evolutionary synthesis of the

[94] For a discussion of these concepts, see Ernst Mayr, "Speciation Phenomena in Birds," *The American Naturalist* 74 (May-June 1940): 249-278. For a helpful summary of Mayr's general principals of zoogeography, see Haffer, 171.
[95] Ripley, "Bird Fauna of the West Sumatra Islands," 415-416.
[96] Ibid.

1940s helped reveal the importance of traditional systematics and taxonomic work for modern biological theory.[97] For Ripley, this proved that museums and their collections could provide helpful insights to scientific problems and contribute to other modes of biological research. Yet in order to convince scientists working in the laboratory and the field about the virtue of museum work, he argued that museum administrators needed to encourage curators to participate more directly in wider academic circles. In a letter written prior to his departure for Washington in 1942, Ripley clearly articulated his feelings about the importance of bridging the gaps between laboratories, the field, and museums:

> I think that anyone interested in experimental work alone should work in a Biology Lab. However, I also feel that in order that Taxonomy, or Museum work, or Evolution Study, in order to keep pace with the rapid development in other fields, and so to help and be helped by them, must take advantage of experimental technique. The line of demarcation between Taxonomy and other fields of research should continue to narrow in the future. Thus, ideally Taxonomists should be as fully trained in other fields as any University research worker in Biology has to be, so that they can take advantage of various experimental methods to advance their proofs. They should have laboratories, opportunities for field work, and many other of the facilities which have been developed in other fields.[98]

Although Ripley had not even finished his dissertation at the time of writing these words, they show that he had already begun brainstorming strategies for how to reassert the relevance of museums for modern science. "It was part of my feeling," he later noted,

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[97] Significantly, Ripley's dissertation work coincided with the 1942 publication of Mayr's book *Systematics and the Origin of Species* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), one of the most important texts for the evolutionary synthesis. See Haffer, 201. For more on Mayr and his involvement with the evolutionary synthesis, see Vassiliki Betty Smocovitis, *Unifying Biology: The Evolutionary Synthesis and Evolutionary Biology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[98] S. Dillon Ripley to Roy Chapman Andrews, 8 February 1941. A copy of this letter can be found included with interview 9, Record Unit 9591, SIA.

"that museums should get much more into ecology and environmental studies than they were. This would be part of the wave of the future."[99]

Yet before Ripley could get too far with his plans to restructure the museum, the United States had become firmly involved with the conflicts of World War II. Eager to contribute to the war effort, Ripley tried to join the Navy upon arriving in D.C. but was turned away for being too skinny. Once at the Smithsonian, however, Ripley became involved with the Institution's Ethnogeographic Board, where his extensive knowledge about the islands and cultures of the Pacific made him a valuable contributor.[100] His participation on the Ethnogeographic Board, paired with his childhood recollections of relatively unknown parts of Southeast Asia, eventually earned him a place on General William Donovan's unit of the Office of Strategic Services (a precursor of the Central Intelligence Agency) where he also served as a consultant for Operation Ultra by gathering intelligence about the Japanese.[101] As Ripley noted in his oral history, knowledge of these parts of the world was a rare commodity at the time, as many people considered the Pacific regions he visited terra incognita: "It's almost inconceivable to think how relatively few people there were in the United States of the twenties and thirties who really had extensive experience abroad, and whose experience abroad was fairly broad, fairly catholic, and not rather narrowly limited to sort of very specialized kind of work," he later recalled.[102] In 1943—immediately following his dissertation

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[99] Ripley, interview 9.
[100] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, December 9, 1980, interview 13, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA. For more on the Smithsonian's war efforts, see Pamela M. Henson, "The Smithsonian Goes to War: The Increase and Diffusions of Knowledge in the Pacific," in Roy M. MacLeod, ed., *Science and the Pacific War: Science and Survival in the Pacific, 1939-1945* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000), 27-50.
[101] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, February 26, 1980, interview 11, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[102] Ripley, interview 11.

defense—Donovan assigned Ripley as his representative in New Delhi, forcing him to quit his job at the Smithsonian.[103] It was the first time Ripley had returned to India since his family's visit in 1927. A year later, Donovan made him chief of secret intelligence for the O.S.S. headquarters in Ceylon, where he came into contact with a number of other O.S.S. members, including Paul and Julia Child, anthropologists Gregory Bateson, David Mandelbaum, Cora DuBois, fellow biologist and conservationist Harold Coolidge, and his future wife, Mary Livingston.[104]

Although Ripley's primary duties included supporting intelligence operations and training incoming agents, while in Ceylon he also used the post as an opportunity to collect new bird specimens. "I went down determined that I would utilize my spare time properly," he noted, "and make a collection of birds for the Smithsonian."[105] To help support this mission, the Smithsonian supplied him with a shotgun, skinning tools, and additional finances to hire local assistants.[106] By the end of his two years in Ceylon, he collected four hundred and thirty-two specimens from the region. In some instances, he even used his political ties to the O.S.S. to gain entry into otherwise restricted areas.[107] As one writer joked, instead of using bird collecting as a front to gather information on people living in the area, he used his status as an intelligence agent to access territory housing rare birds.[108] Another famous anecdote from Ripley's wartime bird collecting

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[103] Harris, *Capital Culture*, 103.
[104] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, August 8, 1981, interview 15, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[105] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, December 22, 1980, interview 14, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[106] Geoffrey T. Hellman, "Profiles: Curator Getting Around," *New Yorker* 26 (August 26, 1965): 32.
[107] Lewis recounts one episode in which Ripley pretended to be a confidant of Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in order to gain entry to a restricted part of Nepal, an incident which jeopardized his work with Ali since Nehru nearly had him banned for potential spying. See Lewis, *Inventing Global Ecology,* 86-87.
[108] Hellman, "Curator Getting Around," 32.

recounts how he spotted a rare green woodpecker while in the shower prior to an officer's party. Determined to capture the specimen, he quickly grabbed his shotgun and felled the bird, but not before losing his towel in front of a large group of arriving party guests.[109] By the time Ripley returned to the States after the War, he had cemented his reputation as a first-rate ornithologist and naturalist, even if some military personnel wrote him off as "simply a gilded bird hunter."[110]

As historian Neil Harris suggests, stories like these from Ripley's war years have become "part of his personal legend, endlessly repeated by his biographers and publicists."[111] Although these anecdotes help illustrate aspects of his character and his dedication to ornithology, they also distill Ripley's time in Southeast Asia into little more than a series of amusing episodes and ignore some of the more significant outcomes of his wartime work. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a detailed corrective, at least two points must be mentioned. First, Ripley's participation in the O.S.S. and his devotion to bird collecting during this period helped him establish a wide network of contacts with ties to and beyond ornithology.[112] The most noteworthy of these was Sálim Ali, India's most famous ornithologist and Director of the Bombay Natural History Society. Their 1943 meeting began an over forty-year-long friendship and collaboration in Indian ornithology and ecology that culminated with the publication of the 10-volume *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan*.[113] Second, Ripley's

[109] Hellman, "Curator Getting Around," 36.
[110] Ibid., 31.
[111] Harris, *Capital Culture*, 103.
[112] In addition to the names mentioned previously, during this time Ripley also began friendships with Yale librarian Wilmarth Sheldon "Lefty" Lewis and Austrian ethnologist Robert von Heine-Geldern.
[113] Sálim Ali and S. Dillon Ripley, *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan: Together with those of Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Ceylon* (Bombay, New York: Oxford University Press, 1968-74). Historian of science Michael Lewis has written extensively on Ali and his role in Indian ecology. For a thorough account of Ali's relationship with Ripley, see Lewis, *Inventing Global Ecology*, 25-53.

prolonged exposure to the people and landscapes of India and the surrounding regions reinforced the fascination with the country he had developed during his childhood. Museum historian William Walker argues that these later experiences in Southeast Asia helped Ripley "develop a deep interest in non-Western societies" and the changes taking place within them despite not being trained as an anthropologist.[114]

Thus by the time Ripley returned to the United States in 1946, many of the professional and personal networks that would serve him during the course of his career were already set in place. His bird collecting and budding partnership with Ali also ensured that his ornithological work would be firmly tied to the museum. Although Ripley's position at the Smithsonian had been filled in his absence, thanks to his wartime connections, alternative positions awaited him at Yale and Harvard. As before, both universities offered him a joint appointment as an assistant professor within the biology department and as an associate curator within the university museum. Despite his graduate training at Harvard, Ripley opted to return to his undergraduate alma mater, Yale, commenting on its relatively small size, noting later that he'd "rather be a larger frog in a smaller pond than a smaller frog in a bigger pond."[115] Overall, he believed he could do more to influence the biology and museum programming at Yale and that the large size and well-established collections at Harvard would have hindered his efforts to conduct what he called "more creative work."[116] In particular, Ripley sought to incorporate more graduate coursework and training in the fields of ecology and ethology at Yale, a direction already gaining ground at the university through the work of his

[114] William S. Walker, *A Living Exhibition: The Smithsonian and the Transformation of the Universal Museum* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014), 198.
[115] Ripley, interview 11.
[116] Ripley, interview 12.

former academic acquaintance, G. Evelyn Hutchinson.[117] Fortuitously, upon Ripley's arrival at Yale, Hutchinson approached him to co-teach a graduate course in ecology, with Hutchinson heading a lab component based on his fieldwork in limnology and with Ripley leading a more ethological module grounded in observations taken at his nearby paddling pond in Litchfield, Connecticut.[118] The two men continued to teach and develop their course on ecological principles for eighteen years and helped train notable ecologists including H. T. Odum, Robert MacArthur, and Lawrence Slobodkin, among others.[119]

By the 1960s, Ripley had established a comfortable life for himself in Litchfield and at Yale. In 1949, he married the recently divorced Mary Livingston, who accompanied him on several of his trips to different parts of Southeast Asia. His children, Rosemary, Julie, and Sylvia were all born during the following decade. In 1959, the University promoted Ripley to full professor and made him the Director of the Peabody Museum of Natural History.[120] After nearly ten years of trying to convince the museum's previous director, Carl Dunbar, to modernize the museum and its functions by creating closer ties with university faculty, Ripley finally had the chance to experiment with some of the bridge building ideas he had conceived as a graduate student at Harvard.[121] During

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[117] L. B. Slobodkin, "An Appreciation: George Evelyn Hutchinson," *Journal of Animal Ecology* 62, no. 2 (April 1993): 393.
[118] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, March 3, 1982, interview 17, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[119] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, November 6, 1978, interview 7, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA. Nancy Slack discusses Hutchinson's teaching legacy and several of his students (including MacArthur and Slobodkin) in her biography of Hutchinson, but does not offer any detail on Ripley's involvement. See Nancy G. Slack, *G. Evelyn Hutchinson and the Invention of Modern Ecology*, 382-388.
[120] David Challinor, "S. Dillon Ripley, 20 September 1913-12 March 2001," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 147 (Sept. 2003): 299.
[121] Ripley discusses how his efforts to bring new museum programming to Yale during the 1950s were consistently curbed by Dunbar, whom he later described as a "rather cautious and careful man who was not inclined to rock the boat and not particularly inclined to want to create innovations in regard to public instruction or public understanding." See Ripley, interview 19.

his five years as Director, Ripley worked to integrate the museum into university research by encouraging graduate students in departments with traditional museum ties, such as geology and anthropology, to use museum collections and to help curate materials that reflected their individual interests.[122] He also improved the professional opportunities for the museum's staff by revamping the docent program through special events and lectures and by publishing an in-house periodical, *The Postilla*, which featured short articles and research papers prepared by the curators.[123] Finally, Ripley experimented with gaining more publicity for the Peabody by hosting award ceremonies, fundraising galas, and traveling exhibits. In one of his more well-known publicity stunts, he booked a national tour of treasures from Tutankhamen's tomb. The exhibit's month-long display at the Peabody infamously debuted with an elaborate reception featuring Egyptian musicians and a belly dancer.[124] Although this decision met with some disapproval from the museum's former director, Ripley later recounted the program's tremendous success with the general public and recalled how in its aftermath the Peabody finally became "an integral part of the life, and in a sense, of the action, of the university."[125] According to Assistant Secretary of Science David Challinor, Ripley's experiments at the Peabody helped him develop a particular administrative style that he later carried over to his management of the Smithsonian.[126]

Ripley's success in establishing the museum as a center for public education and outreach during his tenure laid the groundwork for what would become his philosophy of

[122] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, May 10, 1983, interview 19, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[123] Harris, *Capital Culture,"* 104.
[124] Ibid., 105.
[125] Ripley, interview 19.
[126] Challinor, "S. Dillon Ripley," 301.

"open education." As William Walker suggests, this philosophy borrowed heavily from Ripley's own hands-on learning experiences as a child and supported the idea that museums should offer visitors informal instruction through independent exploration.[127] Walker also connects this philosophy to the ideals of progressive education reformers who sought to bypass the "rigid and pedantic strictures of American education in this period."[128] What Walker neglects to mention, however, is that Ripley's ideas about open education and the function of museums were also firmly linked to his work with the environmental and conservation movements. These ideas (and the term open education itself) became most clearly articulated during the next major stage in Ripley's career as the eighth Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

Putting Humans Back in to Nature: Dillon Ripley and the "Human-Society-Plus-Environment" Ecosystem Concept

In 1964, the Board of Regents and the Smithsonian elected the then fifty-one year old Ripley to replace Leonard Carmichael as head of the Institution. Although Ripley ultimately accepted the position, as several of his biographers note, the decision to leave Yale proved an extremely difficult one, since it meant not only foregoing his directorship of the Peabody just as he was beginning to implement change, but also leaving behind his beloved duck ponds at the Litchfield family estate.[129] Yet as with the Peabody, Ripley viewed the opportunity to head the Smithsonian as another chance to implement his philosophy on museums. In particular, he wanted to go beyond the museum's use as a site for public education by applying its resources to modern conservation research. At

[127] Walker, *A Living Exhibition*, 86.
[128] Walker, *A Living Exhibition*, 87.
[129] Challinor, "S. Dillon Ripley," 299.

the time of his election, Ripley acted as a leading voice in the growing environmental movement, a position earned through his involvement with organizations such as the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP), the International Wild Waterfowl Association (IWWA), and the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands, among others.[130] Developing from earlier conservation efforts aimed towards the efficient management of natural resources, organizations such as these pushed for additional legislation and policy measures that would conserve resources while actively protecting and *preservi*ng endangered wildlife.[131] Thus throughout the 1950s and into the early '60s, Ripley also supported and participated in a number of avicultural efforts to breed and raise rare and endangered birds in captivity and even hosted several species of waterfowl on his own ponds in Connecticut.[132] Today, his name is frequently linked to the successful captive breeding of birds such as the American wood duck, the Hawaiian nene goose, and the whooping crane.[133]

Although his first concern was the protection of vanishing birds, Ripley's publications during this period reveal his interest in preserving the habitats of other

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[130] Ripley served as President of the ICBP from 1958-1982 and was a founding member of the IWWA, also in 1958. For more on his work with the Galapagos Island Foundation, see P. Petitjean, V. Zharov, G. Galser, J. Richardson, B. de Padirac, and G. Archibald, (eds.), *Sixty Years of Science at UNESCO, 1945-2005* (Paris: UNESCO, 2006), 204.

[131] For a discussion on the distinction between "conservation" and "preservation" see John McCormick, *Reclaiming Paradise: The Global Environmental Movement* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 1989), 25-46.

[132] Jesse D'Elia discusses several of Ripley's contributions in his overview of conservation breeding practices. See Jesse D'Elia, "Evolution of Avian Conservation Breeding with Insights for Addressing the Current Extinction Crisis," *Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management* 1 (November 2010): 194-196. Jean Delacour, Ira N. Gabrielson, Robert A. McCabe, David A. Munro and E. R. Kalmbach, "Report to the American Ornithologists' Union by the Committee on Bird Protection, 1959," *The Auk* 77 (Jan. 1960): 73-77. Finally, Ripley himself addresses his avicultural efforts in a collection of biographical essays and reflections. See Dillon Ripley, *A Paddling of Ducks* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1957).

[133] D'Elia, "Evolution of Avian Conservation Breeding," 194-196; Thomas R. Dunlap, "Organization and Wildlife Preservation: The Case of the Whooping Crane," *Social Studies of Science* 21, no. 2 (May 1991): 197-221. Mark Barrow also briefly mentions Ripley's involvement with efforts to save the whooping crane in the late 1950s as part of the Whooping Crane Conservation Association. See Barrow, *Nature's Ghosts,* 304.

animals as well, especially those living in Southeast Asia.[134] Nowhere is his preoccupation with maintaining the region clearer than in the text of his 1964 book, *The Land and Wildlife of Tropical Asia*. Written based on his fieldwork in parts of India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea during the 1950s and '60s, his book provides details about the region's diverse geography and its unique flora and fauna with equal gusto.[135] Also included in Ripley's overview of the landscape is a final chapter entitled, "The Human Invasion," which chronicles the history of human habitation throughout the continent using contemporary archaeological and anthropological findings. In this section, he showcased the many cultures of the region (what reviewer Harold Coolidge refers to as the "human landscape") and provided examples of how these communities interacted with their natural environments.[136] These examples included the different ways people adapted to extreme environmental conditions, how groups of people cultivated the land by harvesting crops such as rice and coconut, and how local traders in Java nearly caused the extinction of the rare argus pheasant through hunting and trapping.[137] As Coolidge's review indicates, it is clear that Ripley considered the human inhabitants of Southeast Asia as important to his discussion of the area's diversity as its plants and animals. Yet in the concluding paragraph of this final chapter, he offered the following warning to the reader:

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[134] Particularly notable is Ripley's attempt to outline the movements and breeding habits of the Great Indian Rhinoceros, which he hoped would serve as a guideline for a study on the even rarer Lesser One-horned Rhinoceros. See S. Dillon Ripley, "Territorial and Sexual Behavior in the Great Indian Rhinoceros, a Speculation," *Ecology* 33 (Oct. 1952): 570-573. Once at the Smithsonian, Ripley also became invested in efforts to preserve the habitat of the Bengal Tiger. For more on Project Tiger, see Michael Lewis, "Indian Science for Indian Tigers?: Conservation Biology and the Question of Cultural Values," *Journal of the History of Biology* 38 (2005): 185-207, and discussions in Etienne Benson, *Wired Wilderness: Technologies of Tracking and the Making of Modern Wildlife* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

[135] S. Dillon Ripley, *The Land and Wildlife of Tropical Asia* (New York: Time-Life Books, 1964).

[136] Harold J. Coolidge, "The Land and Wildlife of Tropical Asia by S. Dillon Ripley," *Science* 148 (April 16, 1965): 361.

[137] Ripley, *The Land and Wildlife of Tropical Asia*, 174.

> As man's numbers increase, as each generation becomes more demanding, our environment and our animal heritage will give way. In the process man finds himself creating inexorable changes. Himself an agent of natural processes, he has the power to affect irrevocably the nature of his world. We owe it to ourselves not to misuse this power and thereby diminish irreversibly our resources and the future of our planet.[138]

Like many of his colleagues and fellow conservationists, Ripley recognized that throughout their history, human beings had acted as the primary destroyers of the natural world. The rapid increase of the world's population following the Second World War made the reality of human impact on the environmental all the more obvious and raised alarm in several scientific and scholarly circles.[139] Until the mid-1960s, however, most environmental efforts remained preoccupied with confronting the disappearance of endangered species, thereby leaving humans largely out of discussion except, of course, as sources of blame.[140] In some cases, conservation advocates seeking to restore equilibrium to natural landscapes (for example geographer David Stoddart) called for the removal of human populations altogether, believing that without human interference it would be easier to analyze and predict instability within the ecosystem.[141] Ripley, however, disagreed with this approach, and argued instead that ecologists ought to reintegrate human populations into their studies by treating them as just another species living and interacting within a larger ecosystem.[142] Based on the idea that ecosystems

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[138] Ripley, *The Land and Wildlife of Tropical Asia*, 174.
[139] For a detailed history on questions of global overpopulation, see Michael Connelly, *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2008).
[140] Barrow, "'The Nation's First Responsibility': Saving Endangered Species in the Age of Ecology," *Nature's Ghosts*, 301-344; John McCormick, *Reclaiming Paradise.*
[141] For one example, see D. R. Stoddart, "Catastrophic Human Interference with Coral Atoll Ecosystems," *Geography* 53, no. 1 (January 1968): 25-40. For more on the tension between conservation policies and human settlement, see Patrick C. West and Steven R. Brechin, eds., *Resident Peoples and National Parks: Social Dilemmas and Strategies in International Conservation* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1991).
[142] S. Dillon Ripley, "The Future of Environmental Improvement," in Ralph W. Marquis, ed., *Environmental Improvement (Air, Water, and Soil)* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1966), 87.

with the greatest level of diversity and interaction tended to be the healthiest and most stable, he suggested that environmental improvement could likewise be achieved through the creation of "humanized ecosystems of maximum diversity."[143] To that effect, he proposed that by studying and comparing the ways different groups of people adapted to their surroundings, it might be possible to determine alternate methods for conserving resources.[144] However, because of the complexity of human beings as compared with other animals, he argued that attaining a more holistic view of an ecosystem required not only a biological understanding of the relationship of humans and the environment, but a social and cultural one as well.[145] Ecologists therefore needed to work together with practitioners in the social sciences, especially anthropologists, who could help analyze the traditions and lifestyles that influenced certain kinds of human behavior.

These kinds of collaborations, he argued, could be supported through initiatives such as the International Biological Program, which in 1964 had identified human populations as an essential component of study in its seven-year plan.[146] Yet Ripley also contended that more effort needed to be made within other international centers to support complementary research projects and to provide current scientific information to the general public. For this purpose, he pointed to institutions like the Smithsonian, where the "best minds in science, technology, and the arts" could freely interact and generate new ideas on how to maintain harmonious relationships between humans and nature.[147] According to his philosophy of open education, through dynamic displays and exhibits,

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[143] Ripley, "The Future of Environmental Improvement," 92.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ripley, "The Future of Environmental Improvement," 87-88.
[146] J. S. Weiner, "The Biology of Man in the International Biological Programme: The Human Adaptability Project," *Current Anthropology* 5 (June 1964): 191-195.
[147] Ripley, "The Future of Environmental Improvement," 94.

museums could provide laymen and scientists alike with a more holistic understanding of the human experience. All it took, according to Ripley, was a simple spark of interest generated by an object or a label freely chosen by the visitor, at which point "a whole series of electrical connections" would work together to not only make learning new things possible, but in his words, would also make it more meaningful.[148] He believed that the Smithsonian, as one of the world's leading museum complexes, therefore had a responsibility to use its collections to inspire and inform the public about the most up-to-date scientific findings. This, he argued, would then provoke in the visitor a greater appreciation for their place within society and the world as a whole.[149]

In addition to aiding environmental awareness through public education, Ripley acknowledged that the Smithsonian could contribute in another way as well: "Let us be zealous in research as a part of conservation," he wrote.[150] Building on his ideas about museums as international research centers, he argued that the Smithsonian could support the scientific community by promoting innovative research through an unrestricted and stimulating work environment. "One of the advantages of working in a museum," he noted later, "is that it is an unfashionable environment. This, then, gives museum research workers the opportunity to work and think unconventionally."[151] He maintained that fostering the scientific diversity typical of museums (and especially museums of natural history) was crucial for developing new theories. Quoting his influential colleague and mentor, Ernst Mayr, Ripley pointed to the study of evolution, which relied on knowledge from a variety of biological specialties taken in tandem:

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[148] S. Dillon Ripley, "Appraising the Prospects for Science and Learning," *American Scientist* 53 (March 1965): 48A.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ripley, "Appraising the Prospects of Science and Learning," 49A.
[151] Ripley, *The Sacred Grove*, 98.

> In many branches of biology one can become a leader even though one's knowledge is essentially confined to an exceedingly limited area. This is unthinkable in evolutionary biology. A specialist can make valuable contributions to special aspects of the evolutionary theory, but only he who is well versed in genetics, morphology, biogeography, systematics, paleontology, embryology, physiology, and ecology can present a balanced picture of evolution as a whole.[152]

Using this example as evidence of the benefits of holistic thinking and collaboration, he insisted that several of the sciences at the Smithsonian (and, in turn, conservation research) would significantly benefit from closer interaction among its diverse staff. Having worked at the Smithsonian during the 1940s, Ripley was no stranger to the potential value of its holdings, especially in terms of its large number of specimens and its access to federal funds. Yet upon arriving at the Institution in 1964, he found the attitude of the staff and the state of its collections to be rather dusty. "I felt the Smithsonian itself was a sleeping beauty," he recalled. "It had all of the necessary ingredients to make it great, but seemed to me to be sort of resting."[153] Determined to wake up the Institution, immediately following his election Ripley instated a series of programs that he hoped would revitalize the Smithsonian's activities. To this end, he authorized the formation of several new cross-disciplinary offices to support the kind of creative and collaborative work he had long envisioned.[154] One of the first of these was the Smithsonian Office of Anthropological Research (SOAR), which he established in 1964 by merging the largely research-based activities of the Smithsonian's Bureau of American Ethnology with the more museum-oriented and curatorial focus of the National

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[152] As quoted in Ripley, "Appraising the Prospects of Science and Learning," 49A.
[153] S. Dillon Ripley, interview by Pamela M. Henson, January 11, 1984, interview 22, transcript, Record Unit 9591, SIA.
[154] These new offices included the Office of Anthropology, the Office of Ecology, the Office of Systematics, and the Office of Oceanography and Limnology. For a description of the new offices and a general scope of their activities, see *Smithsonian Year 1965: Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for the Year Ended June 30, 1966* (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1966).

Museum of Natural History's Department of Anthropology.[155] He viewed anthropology as a natural starting point because of the discipline's traditional ties to museum collections and because of its importance in the Smithsonian's early development as a research institution.[156] From an administrative standpoint, the merger also seemed an effective way to expand the discipline's relevance within the Institution while simultaneously eliminating the redundancy of having two individual budgets dedicated to anthropological research.[157] He anticipated that the larger size and varied interests of the Office of Anthropological Research would promote closer cooperation among the Institution's diverse staff and would encourage collaboration not only among anthropologists working on different topics, but other practitioners working on similar questions across the life sciences. In reality, the merger was met with strong resistance from scholars both within and outside the Smithsonian, a topic I will return to in the next few chapters.

Following the creation of the SOAR, in 1965 Ripley established the Smithsonian Office of Ecology. Like the SOAR, the Office of Ecology extended the capacities of existing Smithsonian infrastructure and programs, this time concentrating on the biological sciences. Headed by ecologist and zoologist Helmut Buechner, the Office coordinated biological research already underway in locations including the Barro Colorado Island in Panama (renamed the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in 1966) and the Radiation Biology Laboratory by supporting projects related to

[155] Richard B. Woodbury and Nathalie F. S. Woodbury, "The Rise and Fall of the Bureau of American Ethnology," *Journal of the Southwest* 41 (Autumn 1999): 292.
[156] "Smithsonian Institution Establishes New Office for Anthropology," *Fellow Newsletter: American Anthropological Association* 5 (Sept. 1964): 1.
[157] *Smithsonian Year 1965*, 39.

conservation and ecosystem science.[158] These projects ranged from cellular studies of the metabolic processes in plants exposed to radiation to higher-level analysis of the behavior and movements of entire populations of animals within their habitat.[159] By incorporating projects that investigated organisms from the micro up through the macroscopic levels, the Office sought to present an integrated approach to ecosystem analysis.[160] The multiple levels of investigation also made it easier to justify these projects within the budget of the Museum of Natural History. While at first glance the more lab and field-based ecological work of the Office appeared at odds with the traditional curatorial and taxonomic work of the museum, Ripley and his associates argued that ecology had "long been an integral part of the Museum of Natural History" and that its extensive collection of biological specimens were "essential for precise determination of the components of the ecosystems under study."[161] In other words, the Institution's historical preoccupation with natural history actually made it an ideal venue for extending a systematic approach to biology into new areas of research.[162] The Smithsonian's vast collections and ties to Washington also made it a logical center for orchestrating work in the environmental sciences both within the United States and abroad. For this reason, Ripley linked the Office of Ecology to global conservation efforts taking place under the auspices of the

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[158] *Smithsonian Year 1966: Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for the Year Ended June 30, 1967* (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1967), 73-77. By the end of 1966, the Office also included the Chesapeake Bay Center for Field Biology and collaborative work on animal behavior and physiology sponsored by the National Zoological Park. For a complete overview of the Office's activities, see S. Dillon Ripley, "A perspective of the Smithsonian program in ecology," *National Parks Magazine* 40, no. 229 (1966): 10-13. The other programs included the Chesapeake Bay Center for Field Biology, the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, and the Smithsonian's Radiation Biology Laboratory.

[159] *Smithsonian Year 1966*, 73.

[160] S. Dillon Ripley and Helmut K. Buechner, "Ecosystem Science as a Point of Synthesis," *Daedalus* 96, no. 4 (Fall 1967): 1193.

[161] *Smithsonian Year 1966*, 73.

[162] Prior to forming the Office of Ecology, Ripley hosted a brainstorming session with biologists and ecologists to determine how natural history museums could be used to advance biological research and what specifically the Smithsonian could contribute to ecological studies. A summary of this session can be found in Anonymous, "News," *BioScience* 15 (Sept. 1965): 607-608.

International Biological Program.[163] This partnership provided Smithsonian researchers with an external funding source while giving them the flexibility to pursue studies in diverse parts of the globe. It also maintained the museum as a central component of worldwide conservation research, since international scholars would be encouraged to consult the Smithsonian's collections while taking stock of the plant and animal populations being studied in the field.

Opportunities to pursue conservation research abroad were further increased by the Smithsonian's access to foreign currency grants, which had become available to its staff in 1965. These grants were a byproduct of Public Law 480, a U.S. food relief act signed into effect by the Eisenhower administration in 1954 to provide surplus agricultural commodities to cash-poor countries.[164] Through this law, countries such as Egypt, Poland, Tunisia, and India, among others, could pay for agricultural goods using their own local currencies, thereby placing minimal stress on the nation's economy. Yet because these funds could not be exchanged for dollars, no actual money changed hands, leading the United States to set up a kind of credit system with the individual country. By the mid-1960s, an overabundance of these credits prompted Congress to open them up to researchers representing federal agencies, including the Smithsonian, who were working on projects in countries with excess funds.[165] As Michael Lewis argues, the availability of these currencies created important reservoirs of research and travel money that would not have existed otherwise, money that Ripley used to his advantage for his own work with

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[163] The first joint Smithsonian-IBP endeavor was directed by Lee M. Talbot and focused on terrestrial conservation and the establishment of wildlife reserves. See *Smithsonian Year 1966*, 75.
[164] William W. Cochrane, "Public Law 480 and Related Programs," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 331 (1960): 15.
[165] *The Annual Report of the President on Activities Carried Out Under Public Law 480, 83rd Congress, as Amended During the Period January 1 through December 31, 1965* (Washington, D.C.: United States Congress, 1966), 14.

Sálim Ali in India and Pakistan[166] Since these funds were also contingent upon cooperation with scholars in local universities in the country of study, Ripley naturally viewed them as a resource for encouraging collaborative conservation work in those parts of the world.[167] Conveniently, a large percentage of PL-480 funds existed in countries with diverse and understudied ecosystems, making them a central monetary device for supporting the Smithsonian's new Office of Ecology.

It is worth mentioning, however, that the Office of Ecology was not the only, nor was it the first department to receive access to PL-480 grants. Before funding the Smithsonian's biological projects, foreign currencies initially could only be used for archaeological and anthropological research, and became a financial staple for the SOAR.[168] Yet this did not deter Ripley from including these funds as a potential resource for supporting more biologically oriented research, since in his mind, humans were as much a part of the ecosystem as anything else. In an early outline of the Smithsonian's ecology program, Ripley noted how access to foreign currencies offered a "rather unique opportunity to combine the efforts of anthropologists and ecologists in developing a more complete history of man as a basis for understanding his current behavior in various regional ecosystems in the world."[169] Once again, he emphasized the need for collaboration between the natural and social sciences and the utility of reintegrating perspectives on human beings into conservation analysis. In an essay co-written with Buechner describing their plans for Smithsonian ecology, Ripley discussed how in order to combat the realities of population growth, pollution, and other environmental concerns,

[166] Lewis, *Inventing Global Ecology*, 94.
[167] Ripley, "A perspective of the Smithsonian program in ecology," 12.
[168] "The Smithsonian Institution Foreign Currency Program in Archaeology and Related Disciplines," *American Journal of Archaeology* 69 (Oct. 1965): 365.
[169] Ripley, "A perspective of the Smithsonian program in ecology," 12.

that there must be a "unity of knowledge" cutting across specializations.[170] Building on a 1942 article by plant ecologist Frank Egler comparing the study of vegetation to that of a composite organism, Ripley and Buechner argued that ecosystems also possessed multiple integrated levels that, though distinct, should be considered and studied as a whole.[171] According to their assessment, humans, along with their total environment, represented the highest level of biological integration.[172] As a result, the pressures of human beings on their surroundings caused the greatest amount of disruption to the entire ecosystem, meaning that the best way to return the total environment to a stable state was through the complete understanding and management of human activity. In their words:

> Man's image of the world in which he lives and his understanding of man's place in the universe are critical in achieving ecological homeostasis. Science can contribute basic facts and ideas about ecosystems. But man's concerns and values also determine the behavior of societies. His conceptual environment has changed through time, a transformation expressed in literature, poetry, music, architecture, and modifications of the landscape. The natural scientist will most probably have less influence in the evolution of a conceptual environment relevant to today's ecological crisis than the humanist. Man's conceptual environment, not science, will determine the future of humanity.[173]

In sum, although ecologists and biologists could provide raw data about the influence of humans on the environment, they themselves could do little to change human behavior. That task, they conceded, was left to the humanists and social scientists, who more directly commented and influenced the direction of human interests. It makes sense, then, that shortly after establishing the Office of Ecology, Buechner approached the SOAR to develop a long-range planning program that would utilize the financial resources made available by PL-480 and that would draw on the strengths of both disciplines in defining

[170] Ripley and Buechner, "Ecosystem Science as Point of Synthesis," 1192.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ripley and Buechner, "Ecosystem Science as Point of Synthesis," 1193.
[173] Ripley and Buechner, "Ecosystem Science as Point of Synthesis," 1196.

a "human-society-plus-environment" approach to ecology.[174] This would not only create a unified approach to ecosystem analysis, but would also synthesize the multidisciplinary purpose of ecological research firmly within the grounds of the National Museum of Natural History. However, they intended this agenda to supplement the research already being pursued by the Institution's scientists and staff, thus demonstrating that the preconditions for an interconnected understanding of the natural world had existed within the boundaries of the museum all along.

A Program for Urgent Research: The Smithson Bicentennial and the Beginning of Urgent Anthropology

Ripley's efforts to develop the bridges between anthropology and ecology at the Smithsonian were further aided by a public celebration corresponding with the creation of the new Office of Anthropology and Office of Ecology. In September 1965, the Smithsonian hosted a three-day celebration honoring the 200th birthday of its founder, James Smithson. Attended by hundreds of scientists, scholars, and members of the public, the event included a multitude of grand gestures intended to showcase the Institution's contributions to science and culture. Among these was the formal academic procession, which featured Smithsonian staff dressed in full academic regalia carrying newly-created banners representing each of the Institution's departments and the debut of a new Smithsonian logo—a sun in splendor taken from the Smithson family coat of arms.[175] To

[174] Helmut Buechner to Sidney Galler, "Cooperation Between the Office of Anthropology and Ecology in the Smithsonian Foreign Currency Program," April 18, 1967, Records of the Department of Anthropology, box 20, folder: Salvage Ethnology – International Programs, National Anthropological Archives (NAA), Suitland, MD.
[175] Wilton S. Dillon, "Prologue," *Smithsonian Stories: Chronicle of a Golden Age, 1964-1984* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction publishers, 2015), 4.

complement the visual pageantry, the event also included over a dozen speeches and lectures given by figures including Ripley, President Lyndon Johnson, author Arthur Koestler, physicist Robert J. Oppenheimer, ecologist G. Evelyn Hutchinson, and anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, among others.[176] Carefully chosen by Ripley, the speakers represented the different departments and interests of the Smithsonian and therefore demonstrated the important interplay of these subjects within the museum. Though each speaker grounded his talk within the specific framework of his discipline, each contributed broader insights to the theme of the unity of knowledge. Unsurprisingly, many of the talks also dealt with issues of conservation and environmental degradation.

Yet perhaps one of the most influential talks was the one delivered by Lévi-Strauss on the achievements of anthropology and its prospects for the future. In his speech, he remarked how many of the world's traditional societies were disappearing, rapidly adapting to new ways of life in the years following World War II. Lauding the past efforts of the Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology in documenting the country's vanishing indigenous populations, he cautioned his audience that similar measures now needed to take place on a global scale. Many of the world's societies were disappearing, he told them, rapidly adapting to new ways of life in the years after World War II. Noting recent achievements in the physical sciences, he compared the need for increased anthropological fieldwork to the response to the hypothetical discovery of an unknown planet and urged his listeners to take up the task of assembling a record of these cultures before it was too late. "For native cultures," he warned, "are disintegrating faster

[176] After the celebration, the majority of these speeches were collected into a volume demonstrating the Smithsonian's importance to both the physical and natural sciences. See Paul H. Oehser, ed., *Knowledge Among Men: Eleven Essays on Science, Culture, and Society Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of James Smithson* (Washington, D.C.: Simon and Schuster, 1966).

than radioactive bodies; and the Moon, Mars, and Venus will still be at the same distance from the Earth when that mirror which other civilizations still hold up to us will have so receded from our eyes that, however costly and elaborate the instruments at our disposal, we may never again be able to recognize and study this image of ourselves."[177]

The salvage message of Lévi-Strauss's speech resonated with Ripley, both in terms of his plans to expand Smithsonian anthropology and ecology and his ideas about the importance of museums as sites for global conservation work. In his own introductory speech at the Bicentennial about the importance of museums and objects for science and learning, he commented on how government aid efforts in developing parts of the world needed to pay equal attention to taking stock of the cultural and scientific resources within those countries as they did to addressing economic and health concerns abroad.[178] Referencing the U.S.'s support of natural history surveys of unexplored frontiers during the late-nineteenth century, Ripley argued that the same mentality should be applied to its involvements in newly accessed parts of the globe, especially in places with high levels of biological and cultural diversity: "We should know the tally and roster of creation before the scales are tipped and species vanish without ever being discovered. We should tabulate and reckon the balance of nature in vast areas of the tropics and the high latitudes before the environment is so altered and deformed as to be unrecognizable."[179] In keeping with his philosophy on museums, education, and conservation, Ripley maintained that though the government should provide financial support to these activities, the task of

[177] Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Anthropology: Its Achievements and Future," *Current Anthropology* 7 (April 1966): 127.
[178] S. Dillon Ripley, "'The Museum as an Enigma': Bicentennial Celebration Commemorating the Birth of James Smithson, Address by S. Dillon Ripley," September 18, 1965, S. Dillon Ripley Papers, Record Unit 7008, box 1, folder: 1965, A-D, SIA.
[179] Ibid.

tallying itself remained the responsibility of the scientists and naturalists working in the museum.

Inspired by Lévi-Strauss's speech and his own feelings about the potential of museums for conservation work, in November of 1965—just weeks after the bicentennial—Ripley approached the Council of the American Anthropological Association at their annual meeting to offer the Smithsonian as an institutional base for a crash program in what he called "emergency or urgent ethnography."[180] Though he acknowledged the efforts of other organizations, including UNESCO, in supporting international anthropological research, he noted that the Smithsonian, as a quasi-government agency, possessed the right combination of funding and scientific neutrality to oversee the project's development into new areas. Citing the biological foundations for human behavior, he argued that anthropologists concerned with disappearing cultures and conservationists seeking to protect deteriorating habitats ultimately had the same goals and should work together to achieve them. "Should not teams of anthropologists and biologists," he implored the Council, "accompany the large economic aid projects that eliminate natural environments and disrupt cultural patterns, at least to record them and perhaps to influence these massive projects in more auspicious directions? It is in the interest of the developing world to push back the horizons of self-understanding if we are to preserve cultural diversity in a world where it is on the wane."[181] In a nod to the suggestions outlined by Lévi-Strauss, Ripley also urged the AAA to work with the Institution to (1) increase the participation of anthropologists native to countries with urgent projects and (2) to provide training opportunities for members of communities

[180] "Official Reports: American Anthropological Association Council Meeting, Saturday, November 20, 1965, Denver, Colorado," *American Anthropologist* 68 (1966): 760.
[181] "Official Reports," 762.

under study who sought to become ethnographers themselves. Such collaboration, he argued, would better serve the aims of an "urgent horizons in anthropology program for a fuller record of man" by increasing the number of qualified fieldworkers able to document vanishing expressions of human ingenuity. Thus as a result of Ripley's visit to the AAA, the Smithsonian's program in urgent anthropology was born.

Conclusion

Ripley's recommendation that the AAA utilize the Smithsonian as the central location for organizing a research program in urgent anthropology demonstrates a culmination of his thinking about the relationship between anthropology and ecology. In his view, the assemblage of ethnographic data salvaged from disappearing cultures could be included alongside other projects undertaken by the Smithsonian Office of Anthropology and the Office of Ecology. This in turn would make it feasible to apply integrated knowledge about human beings to a variety of social and scientific dilemmas emerging during the mid-1960s—including issues relevant to environmental conservation. The centrality of anthropology for this endeavor would also help promote his holistic vision of the environment as including and not separate from human beings—a conception Ripley had held early in his life and career. Although he did not label it as such, what he was proposing was, in many respects, a museum-based approach to human ecology (a topic I will return to in Chapter 5) that could incorporate perspectives from the human and biological sciences in the construction of interdisciplinary exhibits.

Yet while his position at the Smithsonian gave him the ideal venue to carry out such a program, he could not develop it alone. Although his life-long fascination with

other cultures certainly provided the incentive to engage with anthropological questions, he lacked the training needed to address them on his own. For that purpose, he needed the assistance of a skilled anthropologist, someone who shared his holistic view of the life sciences and who could help him set plans for a program in urgent anthropology into motion. In the next chapter, I will concentrate on the person selected for this task, University of Chicago anthropologist Sol Tax, and his own reasons for supporting a Smithsonian program in urgent anthropology.

CHAPTER THREE

Anthropology for a World in Crisis:

Sol Tax and the Urgency of Action Anthropology, 1945-1966

> Anthropology, reified as the study of man, is actually the study of men in crisis by men in crisis.
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> —Stanley Diamond, "Anthropology in Question," 1972.[182]

Introduction

As with the previous chapter, this chapter considers some of the personal intellectual justifications underlying the development of Smithsonian urgent anthropology, this time concentrating on the early life and career of its other main organizer, Sol Tax. Although largely forgotten in general histories of anthropology, Tax—like Ripley—emerged as an important leader in his discipline after World War II.[183] He achieved this status primarily through his work with the newly created Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and especially as the founding editor of its journal, *Current Anthropology*. Through this publication, Tax sought to establish an international community of anthropologists and like-minded scholars working broadly in anthropology. This aim was partially a response to the discipline's rapid growth following the War, particularly in the United States. As a result of his effort to maintain

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[182] Stanley Diamond, "Anthropology in Question," in *Reinventing Anthropology*, ed. Dell Hymes (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 401.

[183] There is no book-length treatment analyzing the full extent of Tax's life and career. There are, however, several biographical sketches written by close friends and colleagues, including George Stocking, Sam Stanley, and David Blanchard. See George W. Stocking Jr., "'Do Good, Young Man': Sol Tax and the World Mission of Liberal Democratic Anthropology," in *Excluded Ancestors, Inventible Traditions*, ed. Richard Handler (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), 171-264, Samuel Stanley, "Community, Action, and Continuity: A Narrative Vita of Sol Tax," *Current Anthropology* 37 (Feb. 1996): S131-S137, David Blanchard, "Beyond Empathy: The Emergence of an Action Anthropology in the Life and Career of Sol Tax," in *Currents in Anthropology: Essays in Honor of Sol Tax*, ed. Robert Hinshaw (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1979), 419-443.

the discipline's integrity at a moment when fragmenting interests threatened to tear anthropology apart, his became a prominent voice on a wide variety of topics and within many institutional and national contexts.[184] Thus as historian of anthropology George Stocking noted in his obituary of Tax, at the time of his death he was "perhaps the most widely known anthropologist in the world."[185]

Despite these contributions, several scholars have credited Tax's absence in the literature to his inability to develop a lasting theoretical intervention with his philosophy on action anthropology.[186] This chapter, however, argues that Tax's action anthropology did have lasting significance, as it provided the methodological and theoretical foundation for almost all of his postwar activities, including urgent anthropology. This method relied on the mutual cooperation and communication between the anthropologist and community under study in order to identify and suggest solutions for that community's social, economic, and political ills. While action anthropology initially targeted the problems faced by the U.S.'s Native American communities, it eventually influenced or became directly incorporated in projects with a more global scope.

By analyzing the development of action anthropology over the course of his career, I emphasize Tax's efforts to use the tools of anthropology—in its fullest expression—to address the needs of different groups of people undergoing change. Doing

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[184] Dustin Wax and Betty Smocovitis have written about Tax's importance as an organizer for postwar anthropology, arguments I will expand on in this chapter. See Dustin M. Wax, "Organizing Anthropology: Sol Tax and the Professionalization of Anthropology," in *Anthropology at the Dawn of the Cold War: The Influence of Foundations, McCarthyism, and the CIA*, ed. Dustin Wax (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2008), 133-142, and, Vassiliki Betty Smocovitis, "Humanizing Evolution: Anthropology, the Evolutionary Synthesis, and the Prehistory of Biological Anthropology, 1927-1962," *Current Anthropology* 53 (April 2012): S108-S125.

[185] George W. Stocking, Jr., "Sol Tax," *Anthropology Newsletter* 36 (March 1995): 43.

[186] Anthropologist John Bennett explores the critique of Tax's action anthropology approach, noting that its particularity to Tax's own fieldwork made it a difficult theoretical model to apply elsewhere. See John W. Bennett, "Applied and Action Anthropology: Ideological and Conceptual Aspects," *Current Anthropology* 37 (Feb. 1996): S23-S53.

so also allows me to show how Tax's method served as an important intellectual tie between the Boasian anthropology of the early twentieth century and interwar years and the applied anthropology used during World War Two and after. Unlike other applied efforts in anthropology, many of which came to support government and development projects, Tax's action method instead sought to benefit the group of people under study.[187] This focus, and its eventual application to the international pursuit of urgent anthropology, suggests an important corrective to current scholarship on Cold War anthropology. While sparse, much of the scholarship on postwar and Cold War anthropology has worked to implicate the involvement of anthropologists in any kind of large-scale research or government-sponsored project.[188] This trend has been largely a reaction to the methodological and conceptual shifts affecting anthropology during the mid-1960s, when the escalation of political and social movements, particularly in Vietnam, caused many anthropologists to fundamentally question the purpose of their work. I will return to this period of "crisis" in anthropology, as it came to be known, in the next chapter.

Stressing Tax's contributions to anthropology in the years leading up to this period of crisis, this chapter instead suggests an alternative and perhaps more nuanced approach to thinking about the possibilities of international anthropological research in

[187] See for example the discussion on this in the British context in James Ferguson, "Anthropology and Its Evil Twin: 'Development' in the Constitution of a Discipline," in *International Development and the Social Sciences*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 150-175.

[188] The leader of this trend is David Price, who has thoroughly chronicled anthropology's government ties in three books covering this period. See David H. Price, *Anthropological Intelligence: The Deployment and Neglect of American Anthropology in the Second World War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), and *Weaponizing Anthropology: Social Science in the Service of the Militarized State* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2011). His most recent, *Cold War Anthropology*, also explores the intersection of basic and applied work after World War II in what he calls "dual use" anthropology, but does so once again with a focus on anthropology's ties to military intelligence operations. See David H. Price, *Cold War Anthropology: The CIA, the Pentagon, and the Growth of Dual Use Anthropology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

the postwar period. In doing so, this chapter covers four major episodes of Sol Tax's life. The first explores his early life, schooling, and entry into anthropology. The second focuses on his graduate training and early career, culminating in the development of his theory and method of action anthropology. The third considers Tax's role as a communicator of postwar anthropology, highlighting his work with the newly formed Wenner-Gren Foundation and his efforts to maintain anthropology as a broadly construed discipline grounded in the Boasian four-field tradition. The final section connects Tax's action mindset to his desire to create an international community of scholars, and concludes by showing how these ideas made him the perfect match for helping Ripley develop urgent anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution.

Beginnings: Towards Walter Mitty Dreams of Greatness

To understand Sol Tax's development of action anthropology, it is helpful to recapitulate certain aspects of his early life. Though born in Chicago, Illinois in October 1907, Tax spent much of his early childhood in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While in Milwaukee, Tax's parents became active in socialist politics, exposing their son to what David Blanchard calls "an ideal climate for young utopians to grown up in."[189] As Blanchard and historian George Stocking suggest, his parents' involvement in American socialism and their Jewish heritage may have given Tax an early exposure to the particular internationalist worldview that later influenced his desire to organize a global community of anthropologists.[190] In his own recollections of his childhood, Tax supports

[189] David Blanchard, "Beyond Empathy: The Emergence of an Action Anthropology in the Life and Career of Sol Tax," in *Currents in Anthropology: Essays in Honor of Sol Tax*, ed. Robert Hinshaw (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1979), 420.
[190] Blanchard, "Beyond Empathy," 420; Stocking, "'Do Good, Young Man,'" 173.

this assertion, recalling how from a young age he experienced "Walter Mitty dreams of greatness" focused on social and political improvement on a world scale.[191] As he recalled in another autobiographical piece: "There was no doubt in my mind that I would take advantage of an opportunity to change anything that was around me into something better. I did not have the notion that anything was necessarily good simply because it existed; it always seemed possible that something could be done with the world to make it better."[192] Though written later in life, these descriptions do seem to account for Tax's image of himself as a young revolutionary and progressive thinker. As his biographers note, Tax's upbringing may have given him an early start in thinking critically about how best to address emerging social and political conflicts.

Tax had initially begun his freshman year at the University of Chicago, but decided to transfer to Wisconsin because he considered it a better place to study political science and economics in order to pursue a future in law or politics.[193] At Wisconsin, he became involved with a number of extracurricular activities, which included the reorganization of the University's Hillel chapter (of which he became president and editor of their *Bulletin*) and the founding of the Wisconsin Liberal Club. As the chief organizer of Liberal Club, he began publishing and distributing a student newsletter, the *Student Independent*, to compete with the University's more conservative *Daily Cardinal*.[194] While these activities helped develop his early organizational skills and

[191] Sol Tax, "Pride and Puzzlement: A Retro-introspective Record of 60 years of Anthropology," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 17 (1988): 2. Walter Mitty is the mild-mannered protagonist first featured in James Thurber's short story, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" (1939).
[192] Sol Tax, "Last on the Warpath," Sol Tax Papers, box 273, folder 2, Special Collections Research Center (SCRC), University of Chicago.
[193] Samuel Stanley, "Community, Action, and Continuity: A Narrative Vita of Sol Tax," *Current Anthropology* 37 (Feb. 1996): S131.
[194] Tax, "Pride and Puzzlement," 5.

interest in managing periodicals, they ultimately distracted him from his schoolwork; the University forced him to take a leave of absence after completing only one semester.

It was also during this time that he had his first exposure to anthropology, picking up a copy of Robert Marrett's introductory text *Anthropology* while supervising a Milwaukee playground in summer 1928. Upon returning to Wisconsin that fall, he discovered that the University had hired its first anthropologist, Ralph Linton, and Tax decided to enroll in his course. He later recalled how after only a few lectures with Linton, he decided to change his major to anthropology.[195] Linton further supported this decision by highlighting the discipline's relatively small size and potential for future expansion. "It's a good field," he told Tax, with "only about fifty anthropologists in the United States."[196]

At the time, American anthropology was still rooted in the traditional four-field approach originally devised by father of American anthropology, Franz Boas.[197] These fields consisted of physical anthropology (which included the study of bones and physical features), archaeology (the study of human remains), linguistics (the study of languages), and ethnology (the study of cultural forms and behaviors). Tax's undergraduate training in anthropology thus mirrored this approach, and in addition to his work on cultural studies with Linton, he took outside classes in topics such as geology, evolution, comparative anatomy, embryology, psychology, and sociology, among others.[198] While still an undergraduate, he also participated in an archaeological dig in Algeria sponsored

[195] Tax, "Pride and Puzzlement," 1.
[196] Ibid.
[197] For more on Boas's role in shaping the American tradition in anthropology, see Regna Darnell, *Along Came Boas: Continuity and Revolution in Americanist Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Johns Benjamins Publishing Company, 1998).
[198] Tax, "Pride and Puzzlement," 1.

by the Logan Museum in spring 1930, followed by a summer and fall term exploring prehistoric sites across Europe and especially France.[199] After graduating from Wisconsin in 1931, he spent an additional summer doing ethnographic and linguistic work with Ruth Benedict and Harry Hoijer among the Mescalero Apache living in New Mexico.[200] Tax later described this summer as the beginning of about a ten year period where he dropped all other political activities and his "wanting to change the world was sublimated into wanting to change anthropological theory."[201]

Yet as George Stocking suggests, despite his work with scholars in a number of different fields, Linton became his primary mentor and instilled in Tax a firm commitment to maintaining the integrity of the four-field approach.[202] Tax's intellectual ties to Linton are significant, since it is likely through their interactions and discussions that Tax conceived of anthropology's practicality as a holistic science. Although it is difficult to know what material Linton presented in his lectures, an introductory textbook published in 1936—only five years after Tax's graduation—may provide clues to some of his thinking. In this text, Linton comments on anthropology's relative youth as a coherent discipline, noting that as a result it had been difficult for him to identify a single work synthesizing the major objectives of the field.[203] While he offered his book as an initial corrective to this problem (and as one of American anthropology's first cohesive textbooks), he also emphasized its importance for allowing anthropologists to take stock of the trajectory of the discipline and its perceived purpose. As the study of "man and all his works," Linton argued that anthropology had an obligation to study as many different

[199] Stanley, S131.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Tax, "Last on the Warpath."
[202] Stocking, "'Do Good, Young Man,'" 174.
[203] Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man: An Introduction* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1936), vii.

aspects of human beings as was feasible.[204] He did not suggest, that doing so would make anthropology a more objective science, since by studying human beings anthropologists already shared too much in common with their subject matter.[205] He instead argued that through the comparative study of other cultures, anthropologists could derive certain common denominators about societies and human nature that in turn could be applied to social reform. Markedly, he noted that with the backing of social scientific observation, it might also be possible for anthropologists to aid in making sense of the "confusion and maladjustment" generated by World War I and the Great Depression.[206]

Such views resonated with Tax and his early progressive sentiments for social improvement. Perhaps as a result of Linton's influence, he came to believe that anthropologists could use their relatively detached perspective as social scientists to help diagnose societal weaknesses and offer solutions. He elaborated on this in his undergraduate thesis, which challenged the extent to which anthropology's focus on cultural processes proved sufficient for responding to those questions actually of interest to anthropologists (or at least, to him). After a careful reading and recapitulation of the extant literature on culture in anthropology, Tax utilized his training in its four fields to consider some of the biological underpinnings of what anthropologists characterized as cultural groups. (In fact, more than half of his thesis looked at redefining anthropology's concept of culture by comparing the organization of human beings with the social behaviors of other animals.)[207] Yet perhaps most strikingly, he concluded that there were only two reasons why anthropologists might be interested in studying cultures: one

[204] Linton, *The Study of Man*, 4.
[205] Linton, *The Study of Man*, 4.
[206] Linton, *The Study of Man*, 3.
[207] Sol Tax, "A Re-Interpretation of Culture, With an Examination of Animal Behavior," Ph.B. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1931, Sol Tax Papers, box 262, folder 5, SCRC, UChicago.

"pure" and one "therapeutic." According to Tax, "pure" research in anthropology referred to collection of anthropological knowledge for its own sake. "Therapeutic" anthropology, on the other hand, mirrored the suggestions later articulated by Linton that anthropological data could in turn be applied to solving social problems. In Tax's estimation (as in Linton's), these two tasks necessarily relied on one another, as "therapeutic" anthropology could not be applied without the availability of empirically-derived facts about cultural processes. Similarly, without some kind of further application, anthropology as the science *and* study of man was incomplete.[208]

Tax's biographers have pointed to this early distinction between pure and therapeutic anthropology as the intellectual precursor to his most well known contribution to the discipline—the development of a theoretical and methodologically oriented action anthropology.[209] Although the term itself was a direct outgrowth of Tax's involvement with the University of Chicago's 1948 Fox Project (discussed later in this chapter), his ideas about anthropology and the relationship between "pure" and "therapeutic" would continued to develop through his graduate training and early career.

Structuralism, Acculturation, and Action Anthropology

Tax began his graduate work at the University of Chicago in the fall of 1931. His arrival at the university coincided with the hiring of British social anthropologist Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown, who had come to America from Australia in 1931 to extend his comparative studies of social organizations to the kinship structures of North

[208] Ibid.
[209] Blanchard, "Beyond Empathy," 422.

American Indians.[210] Radcliffe-Brown's major innovation in anthropology at the time was his notion of "structural functionalism."[211] According to this theory, the inner workings of a society could be understood through an examination of that society's physical structure and organization, the different roles or functions carried out by individuals living or working within that society, and the relationships those individuals in turn had with one another.[212] He argued that by using this method, anthropologists could also identify and isolate concrete units of analysis that could be compared across other societies. With enough cases to compare, he suggested that broader generalizations could then be gleaned about the social habits and organizations of human beings overall.

The comparative element of Radcliffe-Brown's approach is suggestive for the development of Tax's thinking in that it stood in stark contrast with some of the main tenets of Boasian anthropology. Specifically, the idea that all societies could be dissected into discrete units and compared across a wide spectrum, with no consideration of external factors such as environment or interactions with neighboring tribes, contradicted Franz Boas's notion that cultural groups could only be understood within a particular historical context and on their own terms.[213] In other words, Radcliffe-Brown's assumption that generalizations derived from one society could be used to understand the inner workings of another exhibiting a similar external organizational structure proved inherently false according to Boas's terms. For Boas, the anthropologist's objective was

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[210] For more on the life and career of A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, see the dedicated chapter in Adam Kuper, *Anthropologists and Anthropology: The British School, 1922-1972* (New York: Pica Press, 1973).
[211] Not to be confused with the theory of "functionalism" as defined by his contemporary, Bronislaw Malinowski, or, later, the idea of "structuralism" articulated by Claude Lévi-Strauss. See Kuper, below.
[212] For a helpful introduction to Radcliffe-Brown's theory of structural functionalism, see the essays assembled in Adam Kuper, ed., *The Social Anthropology of Radcliffe-Brown* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977).
[213] These are the core tenets of Boas's notions of historical particularism and cultural relativism, which he outlines in Franz Boas, "The Limitations of the Comparative Method of Anthropology," *Science* 4 (Dec. 1896): 901-908.

to discover the process by which a particular culture developed over time, not simply discern its individual kinship systems or organization at a given moment. It is for this reason that Boas advocated using the different anthropological tools provided through archaeology, ethnology, linguistics, and physical anthropology to gain a complete sense of a single culture.

Following his 1931 arrival in the United States, Radcliffe-Brown thus found himself at odds with the majority of views expressed by American anthropologists, whom he criticized for focusing too closely on pinpointing the specific context of a single culture, thereby missing potentially broader implications. For him, Boas's historical reconstructions remained largely untestable and could not be used to develop anthropology into a true science of society. In contrast, he argued that his structural functionalist approach to studying human beings allowed for a more scientific model that could be applied to analyzing the way societies changed and functioned in general.

Although Radcliffe-Brown's brand of structural functionalism did not gain much traction among the majority of anthropologists working in the United States (due in large part to his return to England in 1937) his theories did affect the work of a few of the graduate students at Chicago, including Sol Tax. As part of his early graduate training, Tax worked as Radcliffe-Brown's research assistant, helping him assess the existing literature on American Indian kinship systems in an effort to extend his social structural theories to the American continent.[214] Through this work, Tax became acquainted with Lewis Henry Morgan's 1871 *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*, a classic text delineating the organization and relationship of individuals within a

[214] Stocking, "'Do Good, Young Man,'" 175.

family unit by blood (consanguinity) and by marriage (affinity).[215] Tax in turn incorporated some of this research in his dissertation on the kinship systems and social organization of the Fox (Meskwaki) Indians in Tama, Iowa, for which Radcliffe-Brown served as his primary advisor. In his dissertation, however, he ended up arguing against Radcliffe-Brown's idea that societies depended on the existence of external institutional structures to ensure that laws passed from one generation to the next, showing through his observations of that since younger generations of Meskwaki depended upon their elders for their wellbeing, they therefore obeyed and following their rules without any additional governing structure.[216] Tax similarly undermined Radcliffe-Brown's views on social evolutionary anthropology by returning to a close reading of Morgan's kinship studies. He showed how Morgan's use of evolutionary concepts to explain kinship structures were adopted only later as a way to justify the commonly held belief that all cultures evolved from a single, unified culture.[217] As Tax pointed out, Morgan's ideas on how certain cultural traits persisted in relation to specific social conditions actually supported Boas's notions of historical particularism, not Radcliffe-Brown's views on the evolution of social structure.

While Tax's research and dissertation work with Radcliffe-Brown brought him into contact with the Meskwaki—the community who would later influence the

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[215] Lewis Henry Morgan, *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1871).

[216] Sol Tax, "The Social Organization of the Fox Indians," Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1935, Sol Tax Papers, box 262, folder 6, SCRC, UChicago.

[217] Morgan was part of a group of early anthropological thinkers collectively referred to as "cultural evolutionists." Influenced by Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* and, later, *The Descent of Man*, cultural evolutionists coupled ethnographic description of indigenous peoples with material specimens gathered by archaeologists to devise a comparative schematic illustrating the development of human civilization over a long period of time. They did not, however, apply Darwin's biological ideas to these discussions, thereby grounding their analysis of human development more in terms of technological transitions occurring over time than as a product of any inherent racial or biological difference. See George W. Stocking, Jr., "The Darwinian Revolution and the Evolution of Human Culture (1858-1871)," in *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 144-185.

development of his method of action anthropology—his graduate training did little to expand upon the notions of "pure" and "therapeutic" anthropology first articulated in his undergraduate thesis. Though at one point in his dissertation he acknowledged that some of the younger Meskwaki in Tama appeared "anxious to move forward according to white standards," his thesis did not suggest signs of any real economic or social trouble.[218] In later reflections, Tax commented on these scientific and cultural blinders, noting that throughout his study of the Meskwaki's kinship structures, his focus remained "relatively pure."[219] "Like a good anthropologist," he reflected, "I listened to what they [the Meskwaki] said, and I learned the kinship system in their terms. But I tried to relate it to anthropology, not to the Indians."[220]

Tax's observation about his primary focus on the assemblage of data as the sole aim of his dissertation research reflects the norm for most academic anthropologists, particularly for those following in the Boasian tradition. Trained in the hard sciences, Boas contended that in order to develop American anthropology into a legitimate scientific practice, anthropologists should pursue strict empiricism through the detached collection of ethnographic data.[221] For this reason, the first generations of Boasians tended to avoid engaging directly with social problems, instead concentrating on recognizing cultural forms through an analysis of identifiable patterns and studies of local histories. Despite the creation of New Deal projects looking to hire anthropologists (for

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[218] Sol Tax, "The Social Organization of the Fox Indians," Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1935, Sol Tax Papers, box 262, folder 6, SCRC.
[219] Tax, "Pride and Puzzlement," 8.
[220] Tax, "Last on the Warpath."
[221] As historians have described, Boas's stress on developing anthropology as a science did not necessarily reflect his personal views, which were actually quite political and socially oriented. See, for example, the discussion of his participation in the U.S. Immigration Commission, through which he actively worked to combat racially determinist views propagated by Social Darwinists and eugenicists. See Thomas C. Patterson, *A Social History of Anthropology in the United States* (New York: Berg, 2001), 44-50.

example the Applied Anthropology Unit of the Bureau of Indian Affairs), the Boasians remained largely separate from "applied" work.[222] Yet during the 1920s and '30s, several of Boas's disciples, particularly Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead, became important popularizes of the discipline through the publication of "romantic" ethnographies like Mead's 1928 *Coming of Age in Samoa* and Benedict's 1934 *Patterns of Culture*.[223] Studies like these helped make anthropology an increasingly attractive discipline to federal agencies, since they demonstrated the field's ability to conduct both holistic and cross-cultural projects.[224]

It is important to note that although introduced to anthropology through the Boasian tradition, Tax's graduate training at the University of Chicago also exposed him to the views of sociologists like Robert Lynd, who openly called for the application of social scientific expertise to political and economic issues.[225] Similarly, Tax's undergraduate mentor, Ralph Linton (himself a student of Boas), had already shifted away from the emphasis on pure, detached anthropology and embraced the rise of programs organized by federal agencies, like the Social Science Research Council, and philanthropic societies, like the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Institution of

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[222] For a history of early developments in applied anthropology, see John van Willigen, *Applied Anthropology: An Introduction* (South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey, 2002). For more on the development of American anthropology during the interwar period, see George W. Stocking, Jr., "Ideas and Institutions in American Anthropology: Thoughts Toward a History of the Interwar Years," *The Ethnographer's Magic and Other Essays in the History of Anthropology* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 114-177.

[223] See Virginia Yans-McLaughlin, "Science, Democracy, and Ethics: Mobilizing Culture and Personality of World War II," in *Malinowski, Rivers, Benedict and Others: Essays in Culture and Personality*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), 187-188.

[224] Patterson, 92.

[225] George W. Stocking, Jr., *Anthropology at Chicago: Tradition, Discipline, Department* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 17. On the development of sociology at Chicago, see Martin Bulmer, *The Chicago School of Sociology: Institutionalization, Diversity, and the Rise of Sociological Research* (Chicago: The Joseph Regenstein Library, The University of Chicago, 1984).

Washington, that sponsored interdisciplinary social scientific research.[226] Eager to find solutions to the political and social problems precipitated by the Depression, and, later, World War II, these organizations became top employers of anthropologists and other social scientists trained during this period.[227] As a result, many social scientists began to consider it their responsibility to provide policymakers with observed data that could be used to help "guide society" through difficult times.[228]

Following the mass influx of immigrants to the United States during the 1910s and 1920s, one of the major topics of interest was acculturation, or, in other words, the process through which one culture could fundamentally alter the behaviors of another.[229] One of the pioneers of acculturation research was Robert Redfield, who had also worked with Tax at Chicago. Following Tax's graduation in 1934, Redfield hired him to participate in a Carnegie-funded study of cultural change in Mesoamerica. Expanding on existing theories of acculturation, Redfield's work looked at how rural communities transitioned into urban ones. He investigated four distinct folk communities near the city of Merida, Mexico, focusing on how different channels of communication between Merida and the satellite communities altered the rates at which they underwent change. He found that those communities with greater contact with the city's inhabitants demonstrated more cultural similarities to city life than those living in the more isolated

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[226] Sydel Silverman, "The United States: The Interwar Period," in *One Discipline, Four Ways: British, German, French, and American Anthropology*, ed. Fredrik Barth, Robert Parkin, Andre Gingrich, and Sydel Silverman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 271.
[227] For a discussion of this development in anthropology, see Thomas C. Patterson, "Anthropology and the Search for Social Order, 1929-1945," *A Social History of Anthropology in the United States* (New York: Berg, 2001), 71-102.
[228] In addition to Patterson, see John S. Gilkeson, "The Psychology of Culture and the American Character," in *Anthropologists and the Rediscovery of America, 1886-1965* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 118-158.
[229] Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville J. Herskovits, "Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation," *American Anthropologist* 38 (Jan.-March 1936): 149.

communities.[230] Interested in creating a "folk-urban continuum" extending his observations across Central America, Redfield assigned Tax to study communities in Guatemala to serve as a comparison with his own observations in Mexico. Tax's fieldwork in Guatemala, however, complicated Redfield's theory on proximity and rates of change. Unlike the people Redfield had observed in the Yucatán, Tax found the communities living in the region's highlands to be economically independent from and even competitive with the local municipalities.[231] For this group, contact with an urban center did not directly influence its own push towards economic development. This prevented Redfield from drawing general conclusions about methods of communication and rates of cultural change between rural and urban societies across an entire region, undermining his notion of a geographic continuum.

Although Tax's observations failed to support Redfield's theory, they did have important consequences for evolving Tax's understanding of culture change. As part of his fieldwork process, Redfield advocated closer engagement with the communities under study, a practice that contradicted the more detached approach advocated by Boasian anthropology.[232] He encouraged Tax to fully interact with the inhabitants of Panajachel, thereby pushing the limits of his objectivity. At Redfield's suggestion, Tax and his wife, Gertrude, became active participants in the community, carrying out a number of small

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[230] Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1941).
[231] Robert A. Rubinstein, ed., *Doing Fieldwork: The Correspondence of Robert Redfield and Sol Tax* (New Brunswick, N.J: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 10.
[232] Redfield is building on the ideas of "participant observation" articulated by British social anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski in his 1922 text *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. In it, Malinowski stipulated that modern ethnographic work required the anthropologist to systematically collect data, but to do so as completely as possible. This included noting the "imponderabilia of actual life," meaning that the anthropologist needed to fully immerse himself in the every day lives of his subjects of study. See Bronislaw Malinowski, "Introduction: The Subject, Method, and Scope of this Enquiry," in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (London: Routledge, 1922), 1-26.

favors and even helping with the birth of one of the local children.[233] According to Redfield, "boring in" to a culture through "increasingly rich and more intimate acquaintance" marked one of the essential qualities of pursuing modern social anthropology.[234] As Joshua Smith argues, Tax's personal interactions with those living in the villages bordering Lake Atitlán helped him begin to conceive of these communities not as isolated units whose lifeways could be applied to theories of "an imagined 'progress,'" but rather as people who were "living in the present *with* modernity."[235] The economic independence he observed in the village of Panajachel, for example, also showed Tax that external pressures to adapt to new stages of development did not always matter, since individual societies ultimately had a say in how and when to incorporate cultural traits from the outside.

In 1940, Tax was appointed a research associate at the University of Chicago, though still technically employed by the Carnegie Institution of Washington. For the next few years he continued to travel back and forth between Chicago and parts of Guatemala and Mexico to continue his research and fieldwork. He returned to Chicago in 1944 for good, now as an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology.[236] Despite America's entry into World War II in December 1941, Tax's work in Mexico and Guatemala had excused him from the draft and kept him in moderate isolation from

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[233] As discussed in Judith M. Daubenmier, *The Meskwaki and Anthropologists: Action Anthropology Reconsidered* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 82.
[234] Robert Redfield to Sol Tax, 26 February 1936, as reprinted in Rubenstein, *Doing Fieldwork*, 127.
[235] Joshua Smith, "The Political Thought of Sol Tax: The Principles of Non-Assimilation and Self-Government in Action Anthropology," *Histories of Anthropology Annual* 6 (2010): 141.
[236] This fieldwork in turn provided the basis for his two most-cited monographs, *Heritage of Conquest* and *Penny Capitalism*. See Sol Tax, *Heritage of Conquest: The Ethnology of Middle America* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1952), and *Penny Capitalism: A Guatemalan Indian Economy* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1953).

wartime activities.[237] Yet at the University of Chicago, the realities of war were omnipresent. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Robert Redfield (who was then Dean of the Social Sciences), issued a memo asking staff for updated reports on their national defense activities to see how the Department might be of service to the war effort.[238] Elsewhere on campus, a team of physicists led by Enrico Fermi was hard at work developing the first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction that would help create the atomic bomb.[239]

Both Tax and his biographers have pointed to World War II as a pivotal turning point in his approach to anthropology. While Tax's daily activities during the 1940s included the benign task of planning a new graduate curriculum for a future batch of students, his preoccupations seemed to lie elsewhere. As biographer and colleague David Blanchard notes, the war brought on a kind of existential and personal crisis for Tax characterized by "weariness of amazement" and "personal soul-searching."[240] At the core of this crisis was the question of scientific accountability. Blanchard suggests that the participation of University of Chicago physicists in creating the atomic bomb ultimately led Tax to ponder the extent to which a scientist could "compromise his humanity" in the name of science.[241] At the same time, his continued contact with communities in Mexico and Guatemala exposed him to a group of young scholars outraged by what they saw happening abroad. In his words:

> Hitler's regime destroyed any thoughts that everything was right with the world and that there could not be wicked people. Also in part another generation was

[237] Blanchard, "Beyond Empathy," 425.
[238] Stocking, *Anthropology at Chicago*, 31.
[239] For an account on the international competition to harness nuclear power, see Amir D. Aczel, *Uranium Wars: The Scientific Rivalry that Created the Nuclear Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
[240] Blanchard, "Beyond Empathy," 427.
[241] Ibid.

> influencing me. I came back to the University from Guatemala during the war and for three or four years, I was in contact with students, and a younger generation was pressing me to become an activist again.[242]

Tax similarly credited these years as marking a return to his undergraduate thinking about anthropology's potential benefits and the distinction between its "pure" and "therapeutic" uses. "Hitler, the War, and the Bomb all played a part in turning me back to my earlier interest in social action," he wrote, "and in the philosophical issues involved in the use of anthropological theory to benefit the people among whom we worked."[243]

Yet whereas the "therapeutic" anthropology described during his undergraduate years largely symbolized an expression of his progressive beliefs, by World War II this idea had become reality. As Stocking notes, the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and the outbreak of World War II proved a decisive moment for shifting anthropology's general attitudes in favor of more applied work, as even the Boasians became committed to speaking out against the social injustices brought on by Hitler.[244] In 1941, Margaret Mead and others formed the Society for Applied Anthropology to determine ways to use social scientific knowledge in the fight against totalitarianism.[245] By 1943, about half of the anthropologists in the United States were engaged with wartime projects, with another quarter participating part time.[246] These projects included work on military and intelligence operations (many anthropologists, including Gregory Bateson and Cora Du Bois, were part of the Office of Strategic Services; Ruth Benedict was part of the Office of War Information), national studies (for example, the 1939 Committee for National Morale, or the Committee on Food Habits, organized by Margaret Mead to improve

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[242] Tax, "Last on the Warpath."
[243] Tax, Pride and Puzzlement," 8.
[244] Stocking, "Ideas and Institutions in American Anthropology," 165.
[245] Yans-McLaughlin, "Science, Democracy, and Ethics," 209.
[246] David Price, *American Intelligence*, 37.

American diets), technical assistance initiatives abroad (particularly in managing infrastructure in the Pacific arena), among others.[247] Robert Redfield contributed to the War Relocation Authority, which interned about a hundred thousand Japanese Americans in camps located in Arizona, California, Oregon, and Washington.[248] Others, including George P. Murdock, Julian Steward, and Clyde Kluckhohn, continued to utilize their wartime connections and government ties to pursue large anthropological projects even after the war's end.[249]

After the war, however, many involved with these projects began to question the purpose and ethics behind the application of anthropological data to support government aims. While some found their participation to be a waste of time, others more fundamentally questioned the potential neo-colonialist implications behind their involvement. For example, as Alice Kehoe and Paul Doughty note, through the war the United States gained authority over many of the islands in the Pacific and thereby depended upon anthropological expertise to aid in their management.[250] As Peter Mandler suggests, concerns about anthropology's potential application as a tool for foreign policy contributed to a general feeling of "disillusionment" with applied work and prompted a large percentage of anthropologists to return to the development of generalizable theories built on the detached collection of ethnographic data.[251]

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[247] David Price identifies these and discusses them at length in *American Intelligence*.
[248] David Price, "Internment Fieldwork: Anthropologists ad the War Relocation Authority," in *American Intelligence*, 152.
[249] Peter Mandler, "Deconstructing 'Cold War Anthropology,'" in *Uncertain Empire: American History and the Idea of the Cold War*, ed. Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 245-266.
[250] Alice Beck Kehoe and Paul L. Doughty, ed., *Expanding American Anthropology, 1845-1980: A Generation Reflects* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2012), 3. For more on the wartime role of anthropologists in the Pacific and the resulting postwar projects, see Robert C. Kiste and MacMarshall, ed., *American Anthropology in Micronesia: An Assessment* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).
[251] Mandler, "Deconstructing 'Cold War Anthropology,'" 249.

In the midst of this period of questioning (and perhaps inspired by his reflections on the war and his conversations with a younger generation of activists), Tax published an essay revisiting his earlier ideas on the distinction between "pure" and "therapeutic" anthropology. Entitled "Anthropology and Administration," the article criticized the basic premise of "applied work" as seen by administrators. Central to his argument was the idea that in order to be of most use to administrators, scientists inevitably produced biased data to match a particular set of values.[252] Yet in order for it to be seen as "valid" by the larger scientific community (and thereby hold the authority sought by administrators), data needed to be gathered empirically and should, therefore, be objective and "value-free."[253] He concluded, then, that scientific data could not be used to treat "practical problems" without jeopardizing its integrity and potential contribution to general knowledge. Yet because of the subject matter studied by anthropologists and other social scientists (namely human beings), Tax suggested that many administrators held the false impression that the unbiased collection of ethnographic data could serve practical ends.[254]

Acknowledging this conundrum, Tax proposed a solution whereby anthropological data could be "applied" to social policy without diminishing its more generalizable scientific value. Firstly, he argued that the relationship between the social scientist and the policy maker needed to be collaborative, since as human beings, both ultimately belonged to a larger society under question. "The ability properly to manipulate ideas about society," he wrote, "depends both upon logical faculties as they are disciplined and sharpened by use in the method of science, and knowledge of the

[252] Sol Tax, "Anthropology and Administration," *American Indigena* 5: 21-33.
[253] Tax, "Anthropology and Administration," 29.
[254] Tax, "Anthropology and Administration," 26.

phenomena of the social world themselves."[255] In some ways, this suggestion echoes Radcliffe-Brown's structuralist influence, since it relied on thinking about individual interactions as part of a larger governing social structure. Anthropologists, Tax continued, had a special role to play within this structure, since they could synthesize their scientific insights with their observations as citizens living as part of a society:

> It is at this high level that social scientists in a democratic society find their greatest usefulness: in applying, as social philosophers, the findings of their science to the formulation of policy, to the planning of a better social order, and to the influencing of the public sentiment in the direction of its formulation so that administrators can implement policies most in keeping with the ultimate social good as it is conceived by the wisest of the men of good-will in the body politic….[256]

Anthropologists, as both citizens and scientists, could therefore act as "social philosophers" who could help inform policy, but should not, themselves, be involved in implementing it. Likewise, he argued that it was also important for non-scientifically trained citizens—as well as anthropologists and policy makers—to be involved with this process.[257]

Tax's ideas about the proper use of scientific knowledge among anthropologists, citizens, and policy makers culminated in 1948 when the Department asked him to organize a summer fieldwork training program for its graduate students. For the program, Tax decided to return to Tama, Iowa, where he had done his own graduate work among the Meskwaki Indians. Instead of focusing on kinship, as he had done in his dissertation, this time he turned to the topic of acculturation. Influenced by his experiences with Radcliffe-Brown, Redfield, and his changing thoughts on the uses of anthropology, Tax

[255] Tax, "Anthropology and Administration," 33.
[256] Tax, "Anthropology and Administration," 33.
[257] Ibid.

asked his students to consider the question of what the future might look like for the Meskwaki Indians. Upon their arrival to Tama, Tax's students found a community in poverty and torn between pressures to change their lifestyle to fit the economic demands of the postwar world and the desire to maintain their old ways of life. Uncertain about how to approach the situation, one of his students, Lisa Peattie (who was, incidentally, Robert Redfield's daughter), suggested that perhaps there was a way their research team could help the Fox address these problems.[258] This became the basis for what is now known as the "Fox Project."

Though Tax initially rejected this idea since it complicated the methodological exercise of collecting ethnographic data by means of detached observation (which was what the Department expected), he eventually admitted to his students that his own thoughts and experiences made this activity a conflict of interest. He later reflected on how Peattie's question about whether the group could "deal with" the Meskwaki's problems returned Tax to his prior social consciousness. "As soon as this happened," he noted, "I could no longer deal with Indians in the traditional anthropological way. I could no longer deal with their kinship system or other aspects of their culture in the abstract, or with information I could gather from interviews and then put together at home on paper. I had to deal with them as human beings, as Indians trying to do things they were unable to do; in short, with their problems."[259]

He thus responded to Peattie by noting that in his experience, it was nearly impossible to study social situations without projecting some kind of moral value or

[258] Daubenmier, *The Meskwaki and Anthropologists*, 115.
[259] Tax, "Last on the Warpath", SCRC

sense of identification onto the community under observation.[260] He continued, explaining that perhaps the team could achieve both its objectives of learning basic ethnographic skills and addressing the needs of the Meskwaki by doing what he called "action research." Building on British social anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski's idea of participant observation, he suggested anthropologists might reinterpret this as an "interferer-observer" method, commenting that in any anthropological fieldwork situation one was "bound to interfere with what you are observing."[261] "By so doing this sort of thing," he continued, "in the long run I think we are apt to learn more about the social structure of the Fox, because we will be running into it all the time, and trying to do something with the Fox, learn more about their culture and personality and almost everything else that we're interested in knowing than any other way that I can think of. In other words, we are not, in fact, sacrificing our ends as "scientists" by performing these operations...".[262]

His efforts to claim his team's activities as based in scientific observation reveal his desire to distance their engagement with the Meskwaki from the applied anthropology previously used by social policy makers and anthropologists working with organizations like the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Although Tax's definition of "action" research at this moment was somewhat vague, what is significant is that he had begun to find a way to articulate what he had really meant by his idea of "therapeutic" anthropology—though it would take him another ten years to actually coin the term "action anthropology" as a

[260] Sol Tax to Lisa Peattie, August 4, 1948, as reprinted in Fred Gearing, Robert Netting, and Lisa R. Peattie, eds., *Documentary History of the Fox Project* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 32-34.
[261] Sol Tax to Lisa Peattie, August 4, 1948, reprinted in *Documentary History of the Fox Project*.
[262] Ibid.

distinct anthropological term.[263] In the essay that finally named and defined action anthropology, he conceded that action anthropologists needed to "disclaim pure science," by employing a method that was more "clinical" or even "experimental" in order to use anthropology to benefit the community under study.[264] To understand what this means, it is helpful again to return to Tax's later reflections on the Fox Project:

> As soon as we began to deal with the Indians in an action-oriented way, the question that arose was, if we are trying to help these Indians, what do we want to become of them? Do we want them to be assimilated into American life or do we want them to find ways to preserve their culture while on the reservation?...We finally realized that the answer was simple—it was not for us to make the decision about what should become of Indians. We could only provide realistic alternatives so that if any individual Indian or a whole community wanted to enter American society, it could be done with decency from their point of view. On the other hand, if they wanted to remain on the reservation, that too could be done with decency from their point of view. The problem was that they were not offered alternatives that made for a life which was tolerable to them as individuals or as a community.[265]

According to Tax, in order to respond to the needs of a community, the anthropologist needed to take on the role of the educator, to present the facts of a given social situation to a community to help them make an informed decision. At the same time, it was not the task of the anthropologist to act as a social worker in applying knowledge to a particular problem. For Tax, the action anthropologist "must be a researcher, with all that this implies."[266] As former student John Bennett recalls, what that implied, exactly, was not something that could be easily defined in the intellectual climate of 1950s American

[263] Sol Tax, "Action Anthropology," *Current Anthropology* 16 (Dec. 1975): 514. Although published in 1975, Tax notes that this essay was actually a reprint of a talk given at the University of Michigan in 1958.
[264] Tax, "Action Anthropology," 515.
[265] Tax, "Last on the Warpath."
[266] Tax, "Action Anthropology," 516.

anthropology.[267] In order for action anthropology to find its proper form, American anthropology as a whole would first need to undergo a period of radical expansion.

Bringing American Anthropology into a New Era: Tax and the Organization of Postwar Anthropology

Luckily for Tax, American anthropology was already in the process of an extraordinary transformation. The years following World War II saw tremendous growth for the discipline, both in terms of its size and breadth of focus. Thanks in large part to the influx of students funded by the GI Bill, the number of professional anthropologists more than quadrupled in size, with membership of the American Anthropological Association expanding from 678 in 1945 to 3,174 by 1960.[268] More anthropologists also meant that parts of the world that had remained largely unstudied could now be explored. Government projects in areas in the Pacific, Southeast Asia, and Central and South America further encouraged the expansion of the field by providing graduate students with ample opportunities for fieldwork, funding, and employment. This arrangement worked nicely, as many of the students in this new generation of anthropologists had been drawn to the discipline through their encounters with seemingly exotic cultures while stationed abroad.[269] Many of them witnessed communities undergoing great change and conflict as a result of the war effort. To them, studying anthropology seemed the best way to address the needs of these societies. As anthropologist Herbert Lewis later

[267] Bennett, "Applied and Action Anthropology," 91.
[268] Patterson, *A Social History of Anthropology in the United States*, 107.
[269] Of course, one cannot speak for the whole of the discipline. One of the characteristic traits of the current literature on postwar anthropology is an emphasis on individual experience and training, making it difficult to assert general claims. Through reading these accounts and through personal conversations with cultural anthropologists earning their degrees in this period, however, there do seem to be some recurring themes that are important to highlight in order to understand the trajectory of the discipline in the 1950s and '60s. For a fairly representative set of accounts on the experience of American anthropologists following World War II, see the collection of essays in Kehoe and Doughty, eds., *Expanding American Anthropology*.

recalled, he and his colleagues sincerely believed that they could "contribute to the lives of the people we studied through the practical application of what we had learned to solving some of their problems."[270] As a result, applied projects and acculturation studies found renewed popularity among a new generation of anthropologists hoping to use their training to find answers to the social anxieties of the postwar world.

The growth of the discipline, however, also raised concerns about the possibility of fragmentation and specialization, generating new debates about the discipline's intellectual configuration. Many American anthropologists, including Tax, considered the comprehensiveness provided by Boasian four-field anthropology to be the discipline's greatest strength. Tax's undergraduate advisor, Ralph Linton, supported this view, advocating the continuation of a broadly construed and scientifically grounded anthropology. In his 1945 book, *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, Linton urged his colleagues to work collaboratively with practitioners in all disciplines focused on the study of human beings—including biology, sociology, economics, and history. He argued that synthesizing these perspectives as a "generalized Science of Man" would help prevent fragmentation in the discipline while simultaneously providing a more cohesive way to comprehend all the "phenomena" that affect human beings.[271] In other words, he saw anthropology as a discipline capable of seamlessly bridging perspectives from the humanities with those coming out of the natural sciences.

Like Linton, Tax also defended the importance of anthropology's disciplinary unity. In the years following the war, he published several pieces on the state of

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[270] Herbert S. Lewis, *In Defense of Anthropology: An Investigation of the Critique of Anthropology* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2014), 57.
[271] Ralph Linton, ed., *The Science of Man in the World Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), 17.

anthropology, including one emphasizing its ability to integrate like-minded fields of study. Reflecting on the discipline's history, he stressed how anthropology's founders, while coming from many different backgrounds and scientific trainings, were ultimately brought together by their shared interest in understanding the development and behavior of human beings.[272] He argued that anthropology in the postwar period should be no different, as long as archaeologists, biologists, geographers, linguists, and others continued to find "meaning enough in the whole study of man" to maintain communication with one another.[273] In his terms, anthropology therefore ought to be able to "naturalize" the perspectives of scholars coming to the discipline from other fields.[274] This, he suggested, had the added benefit of allowing a community of anthropologists to tackle a scientific problem using a variety of skill sets. Echoing Franz Boas's earlier justifications for employing a four-field approach to the study of a culture, Tax argued that an integrated anthropology would present the tools need by anthropologists to fully grasp cultures while out in the field.[275] For Tax, an integrated anthropology meant maintaining a fluid understanding of the subject of "man"—be it "man as an animal, as a population, as a species."[276] Like Linton, he called for anthropology to be all-inclusive and to incorporate as many opinions as possible. Yet this task had been much easier before the war, when (at least in the United States) all members of the American Anthropological Association could easily fit into one room.[277] The growing number of

[272] Sol Tax, "The Integration of Anthropology," *Yearbook of Anthropology* (1955): 315.
[273] Tax, "The Integration of Anthropology," 316.
[274] Tax, "The Integration of Anthropology," 316.
[275] Tax, "The Integration of Anthropology," 320.
[276] Tax, "The Integration of Anthropology," 318.
[277] For extended discussion of the development of the American Anthropological Association after World War II, see Susan R. Trencher, *Mirrored Images: American Anthropology and American Culture, 1960-1980* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 2000).

anthropologists in the United States, not to mention the formation of new departments of anthropology in countries all over the world, required a different solution.

Thus beginning in 1952, Tax became heavily invested in facilitating communication among an international community of anthropologists. He managed this primarily through his involvement with the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Founded in 1941 by Axel Wenner-Gren and Paul Fejos, the original mission of the Foundation was to promote "research, educational, technical, and scientific work" for all the sciences.[278] They soon realized, however, that Wenner-Gren's endowment of $29 million was not enough to compete with the resources provided by major philanthropies such as the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations. Fejos, a Hungarian doctor and ethnographic filmmaker, instead encouraged Wenner-Gren to invest in anthropology. Under the direction of Paul Fejos, the Foundation concentrated on synthesizing anthropological knowledge by organizing conferences and publishing the subsequent volumes. In particular, the Foundation sought to document "important ethnographic and archaeological data that were in danger of rapidly disappearing" that could in turn be used to "engender post-World War II social cooperation."[279] In 1952, the Foundation hosted an international symposium to inventory the state of the discipline. Tax was invited to participate in the symposium, along with fifty other major figures working in the human sciences.[280] He had previously met Fejos at a conference on acculturation and Latin American studies, which also had been funded by the Wenner-

[278] Leslie C. Aiello, "The Wenner-Gren Foundation: Then and Now," *General Anthropology* 17 (Fall 2010): 2. Although originally named The Viking Fund, the Foundation quickly adopted the name of its primary donor. See also The Viking Fund, Inc., *The First Ten Years, 1941-1951* (New York: The Viking Fund, Inc., 1951).
[279] Richard C. Hung, "Introduction," in *The First Ten Years, 1941-1951* (New York: The Viking Fund, Inc., 1951).
[280] Stanley, "Community, Action, and Continuity," S133.

Gren Foundation.[281] Recognizing Tax's editorial skills, Fejos enlisted him to edit a summary volume of the 1952 conference, published as *An Appraisal of Anthropology Today*. In it, Tax continued to highlight the benefits of anthropology's four-field approach.[282]

Like Tax, Paul Fejos agreed that communication was the best way to keep the growing discipline of anthropology abreast of new developments worldwide. Dissatisfied with his own attempts to produce a *Yearbook of Anthropology* summarizing the discipline's achievements, Fejos approached Tax with the idea of creating a more rapid and comprehensive publication to be distributed on an international scale.[283] Tax had also been thinking about the idea of an international journal, first proposing a world journal entitled *Man* at the 1956 Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in Philadelphia.[284] With this end in mind, Tax traveled around the world to meet with scholars in order to come to a decision about the format for his new journal. After taking suggestions from hundreds of anthropologists, Tax determined that the new periodical would be bi-weekly and include a comment section where the journal's "associates" could voice their opinions about articles as well as announce research opportunities or suggestions. Through this format, the journal could function both as a forum for communication as well as an up-to-date inventory of research projects representing the

[281] The Foundation also paid for those papers to be published in the synthetic volume entitled *Heritage of Conquest*, edited by Tax.
[282] Sol Tax, Loren C. Eiseley, Irvin Rouse, Carl F. Voegelin, eds., *An Appraisal of Anthropology Today* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953), v.
[283] Sol Tax, "The History and Philosophy of Current Anthropology," *Current Anthropology* 6 (June 1965): 243.
[284] Sol Tax, "The History and Philosophy of Current Anthropology," *Current Anthropology* 6 (June 1965): 238, 242.

state of the field.[285] In 1959, *Current Anthropology: A World Journal of the Sciences of Man* released its inaugural "pre-issue" to approximately 3,000 people.[286]

Though busy with the new journal, Tax continued to organize conferences and edit publications—pursuits he later considered to be among his major contributions as a professional anthropologist.[287] The same year of *Current Anthropology*'s debut, Tax organized a sesquicentennial celebration commemorating the birth of Charles Darwin and the centennial of the publication of *On the Origin of Species*.[288] Held at the University of Chicago, the conference brought together anthropologists and biologists to discuss the role of evolution within the human sciences.[289] Tax also used it as an opportunity to marry his pursuit of an integrated anthropology with his growing interest in human evolution. Three years later, Tax returned to his original focus on North American Indians, bringing together more than ninety tribes for the Chicago American Indian Conference. Through this conference, these communities produced a *Declaration of Indian Purpose*, which was formally presented to President John F. Kennedy in 1962. As Tax's colleague Sam Stanley noted, this conference employed an action anthropology approach that gave the American Indian community a forum in which to express itself and the opportunity to influence U.S. policy on Native American rights.[290]

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[285] Wax, "Organizing Anthropology," 138-139.
[286] Wax, "Organizing Anthropology," 139; Stocking, "Do Good, Young Man," 206.
[287] Tax's identifies his top three professional activities in his retrospective. They are: 1) duties related to his teaching position at Chicago, 2) editing volumes and organizing conferences, 3) pursuing opportunities where anthropological knowledge could be applied through the philosophy of action anthropology. See Tax, "Pride and Puzzlement," 5.
[288] As with his other conferences, papers from the event were compiled and published as series of volumes. See Sol Tax, ed., *Evolution after Darwin: The University of Chicago Centennial*, vol. I-III (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960).
[289] Vassiliki Betty Smocovitis, "Humanizing Evolution: Anthropology, the Evolutionary Synthesis, and the Prehistory of Biological Anthropology, 1927-1962," *Current Anthropology* 53 (April 2012): S108-S125.
[290] See Joan Ablon, "The American Indian Chicago Conference," in Hinshaw, ed., *Currents in Anthropology: Essays in Honor of Sol Tax* (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1979), 445-456.

Although Tax's involvement in these different activities may appear random, as George Stocking notes, "they were all expressions of his desire to sustain and increase the visibility, power, and efficacy of a broadly embracive, integrated, and organizationally unified discipline of anthropology."[291] Significantly, he also sought to do this on a global scale, actively bringing together anthropological ideas and traditions from different national contexts. As a result, Tax emerged as one of the discipline's primary organizers, and, as Dustin Wax argues, did "more than anyone else in his generation" to guide anthropology's professionalization and expansion into new directions during the Cold War.[292]

Using his status as a leader and organizer, Tax continued to advocate the merits of a broad, four-field approach to the discipline and the importance of proper communication among its practitioners. In 1964, Tax put together a volume made up of essays written by young scholars whom he saw as representing the future of the field. Featuring papers on linguistics, evolution, politics, religion, and other subjects, *Horizons of Anthropology* provides a useful snapshot of the discipline at that moment, Tax's general relationship to it, and what he saw as its defining innovations over the previous two decades.[293] In the closing essay, Tax also emphasized the important niche anthropologists filled in understanding public affairs. He wrote that it was the duty of anthropologists to share their knowledge with others and to pass on the particular set of values gained by the anthropological way of life to anyone who would listen.[294] Once again, Tax defined anthropology as a field to be pursued as broadly as possible using as

[291] Stocking, "Do Good, Young Man," 183.
[292] Wax, 134.
[293] Sol Tax, ed., *Horizons of* Anthropology (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1964).
[294] Sol Tax, "The Uses of Anthropology," in Sol Tax, ed., *Horizons of* Anthropology (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1964), 251.

many tools from other disciplines as needed. "Knowing mankind," he wrote, "is to know all varieties of mankind," including those explained through the perspectives of other disciplines.[295] Tax argued that only by adopting a general anthropology could the discipline gain enough knowledge to achieve its ultimate task of responding to global social concerns. At the same time, Tax noted that it was important for the anthropologist to approach these problems as both an actor and an observer, suggesting that "like a physician," an anthropologist must "accept the problems of a whole community as his own problems."[296] For Tax, this required anthropologists to adopt the basic ideas behind his method of action anthropology. To help the reader understand what he meant, he closed his essay with a revised definition of action research:

> It does not fit the distinction frequently made between pure and applied research. It requires the intellectual and political independence that one associates with a pure researcher; it depends upon university and foundation connections and support rather than those of a client or government. But it also requires that the anthropologist leave his ivory tower and that without losing his objectivity he enter into some world of affairs which becomes for the time being his laboratory…The stakes are high and the game dangerous; but action anthropology is nevertheless quite in the tradition and spirit of general anthropology, and promises to provide the best demonstration of its meaning and use.[297]

With this definition, Tax laid out his agenda for pursuing postwar anthropology on an international scale. Anthropologists needed to move past their preference for detached observation and for constructing social theories with no apparent use. They needed to maintain their integrity as scientists but also as human beings living in a rapidly changing and interconnecting world. They needed to ally themselves with new institutions that would support the application of anthropological research, but outside of government

[295] Tax, "The Uses of Anthropology," 253.
[296] Tax, "The Uses of Anthropology," 257.
[297] Ibid.

needs. Most importantly, they also needed to work in collaboration with the communities being studied while maintaining open communication with one another.

Sol Tax comes to the Smithsonian

Highlighting the aims outlined by Tax in his revised definition of action anthropology is crucial for understanding the mindset in which he approached the organization of the Smithsonian's program in urgent anthropology—which I will cover in the next chapter. Before I move on to discuss the development of urgent anthropology, let me conclude by showing how Tax ended up at the Smithsonian in the first place.

Tax's involvement with Smithsonian anthropology began shortly after the 1965 bicentennial celebration, when he became the head of the consolidated Office of Anthropological Research. Despite Ripley's enthusiasm for Smithsonian anthropology, his decision to merge the Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE) with the Department of Anthropology generated substantial unease among the staff and especially the former members of the BAE. In particular, former members of the Bureau worried that their traditional focus on the research and assemblage of anthropological data would be neglected in favor of other tasks. Speaking on behalf of his BAE colleagues, William Sturtevant emphasized that the Bureau's contributions to some anthropological topics, such as linguistics, reached beyond the capacities of the museum. "If the BAE were transferred to the museum," he wrote, "there is a clear danger that in the course of time the emphasis in hiring and other research support would be on material culture."[298] In a private letter to Ripley, Sturtevant continued: "My principal worry is that although in

[298] William Sturtevant, "Why a Bureau of American Ethnology?" May 1962, Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE) Records, box 286, folder: Functions of BAE, National Anthropological Archives (NAA), Smithsonian Institution.

name it is a merging of the Department into the Bureau, in effect it may turn out to be the reverse, the swallowing up of the smaller by the larger, unless extreme precautions are taken to preserve the advantages for research which the BAE now has over the Department."[299] Anthropologists working outside of the Institution also questioned the merger's benefits for Smithsonian anthropology and instead suggested Ripley strengthen the Bureau by expanding its geographic reach to cover "not simply the United States and its possessions, but all parts of the world in which we have vital interests."[300]

Recognizing his own ignorance of the discipline's needs, Ripley approached Tax to serve as his official advisor on Smithsonian anthropology. Familiar with Tax's leadership within the Wenner-Gren Foundation and *Current Anthropology*, Ripley expressed confidence that Tax could successfully rejuvenate Smithsonian anthropology and develop new programs that would ultimately "affect the whole discipline, both nationally and internationally."[301] It is also likely Tax's central role in organizing the 1959 Darwin Centennial and his participation in the 1955 conference "Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth" proved him a kindred spirit in Ripley's efforts to integrate social science perspectives within biology and ecology.[302] In an early planning meeting with Tax and other members of his executive committee, Ripley emphasized the importance of promoting the Institution's role in bridging anthropology and ecology and stressed that doing so would place the Smithsonian in a good position to become a leader

[299] Letter, William Sturtevant to S. Dillon Ripley, June 22, 1964, BAE Records, box 286, folder: Bureau of Anthropology (1 of 2), NAA.
[300] Frederica de Laguna to Dillon Ripley, July 19, 1964, BAE Records, box 286, folder: Bureau of Anthropology (1 of 2), NAA.
[301] S. Dillon Ripley to Sol Tax, November 10, 1965, Sol Tax Papers, box 196, folder 2, SCRC, UChicago.
[302] Although Tax did not present a paper at the 1955 conference, he did participate during its general discussion. See William L. Thomas, ed., *Man's Role In Changing the Face of the Earth* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956).

in what promised to be a fashionable area of future research.[303] To him, Tax exhibited the foresight and scholarly creativity needed to help guide Smithsonian anthropology into a more productive age while also supporting the interdisciplinary intentions for his new scientific offices. For Ripley, Tax was the clear choice to bring Smithsonian anthropology into a new age and, in his mind, was already head of its operations.[304]

From Tax's perspective, Ripley's offer was an attractive one, as it complemented his existing roles as a leading scholar and organizer of postwar anthropology while providing another outlet to advance his own intellectual pursuits. Though already established in the academy and the international community through his positions at the University of Chicago and Wenner-Gren, an affiliation with the Institution promised to bolster his efforts to establish a "world anthropology" by connecting him with a different set of scholars both within and outside of the discipline.[305] His access to the Smithsonian's museums and archives also provided a new forum in which to experiment with applying his ideas about action anthropology.

Ripley's decision to bring Tax onboard as his advisor on anthropology coincided with the 1965 bicentennial celebration. As a guest of honor at the event, Tax heard Lévi-Strauss's plea for increased anthropological fieldwork firsthand and, like Ripley, was moved by Claude Lévi-Strauss's call-to-action. Lévi-Strauss's speech similarly supported many of Tax's assertions on the future of the discipline. Like Tax, Lévi-Strauss emphasized the need to address the changing nature of postwar anthropology by allowing

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[303] Sol Tax, Handwritten notes, "Smithsonian Program Meeting," May 4, 1965, Sol Tax Papers, box 200, folder 7, SCRC, UChicago.
[304] Martha Henderson to Sol Tax, "Return of Hunter Papers. Administrative problems," February 1, 1965, Sol Tax Papers, box 195, folder 3, SCRC, UChicago.
[305] I am borrowing this term from Stocking, who uses it as a section heading in "'Do Good, Young Man,'" 237.

those who were once considered the subjects of the discipline the opportunity to "claim the right to observe this culture of theirs themselves…from the inside."[306] The act of helping rapidly changing societies study their own cultures would provide new general anthropological knowledge while making it possible for those cultures to use that knowledge simultaneously for their own benefit—an outlook very reminiscent of Tax's description of action anthropology. In addition to engaging more closely with cultures under study, Lévi-Strauss also emphasized that the best way of allowing anthropology to make a real contribution to understanding humankind in a postwar world was through the active collaboration with practitioners working in other disciplines, a point made clear to Tax through his work with Linton and Fejos.[307] Finally, the bulk of Lévi-Strauss's speech maintained that anthropology still had work to do in filling the gaps of its knowledge and needed to turn its attention back to recording ethnographies of so-called "primitive" societies while still retaining an interest in the cultural changes of larger, more urban communities. According to Lévi-Strauss, this kind of salvage work required an efficient means of communication within the discipline on a worldwide scale in order to determine what research should be considered most urgent. This seemed a natural extension of the work already carried out through the publication of *Current Anthropology*.

With Lévi-Strauss's call to arms in mind, Tax accepted Ripley's invitation to act as his anthropological advisor.[308] In early 1966, he submitted a proposal to the University of Chicago supporting the use of Smithsonian funds for the development of four major long-term programs. These included: 1) a program to study rapidly changing cultures

[306] Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Anthropology: Its Achievements and Future," *Current Anthropology* 7 (April 1966): 126.
[307] Ibid.
[308] Sol Tax to Lévi-Strauss, January 31, 1966, Sol Tax Papers, box 38, folder 7, SCRC, UChicago.

across the globe, 2) a program on North American Indians synthesizing existing knowledge through the production of a revised Handbook of North American Indians, 3) a paleoanthropology program focused on excavating the remains of fossil hominids, and 4) an archaeological survey of South America.[309] These programs represented a mixture of research projects already underway at the Smithsonian as well as more broadly conceived programs that would serve the needs of anthropology as a whole. In effect, the proposal revealed Tax's intentions to incorporate the Smithsonian's activities into his larger plan for world anthropology. As with his other leadership and organizational endeavors, he planned to develop the Smithsonian's programming through continual communication with members of the Smithsonian Office of Anthropology, supplemented by frequent conference meetings and the distribution of *Current Anthropology*. Such communication, he argued, would help integrate the Smithsonian's anthropologists within a worldwide network of scholars while in turn stimulating the expansion of the Office of Anthropology into an Office of "Human Sciences, as it might appropriately be termed."[310] Thus from the beginning, Tax envisaged Smithsonian anthropology as including a broadly construed, cross-disciplinary rubric. With an agenda in place, Tax turned his attention to the first task at hand—establishing an urgent anthropology program for the study of changing cultures.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the life and career of University of Chicago anthropologist Sol Tax in order to draw out some of the important intellectual,

[309] Sol Tax, "A Proposal to Develop Long-Range Programs in Human Sciences at the Smithsonian Institution," January 2, 1966, Sol Tax Papers, box 198, folder 7, SCRC, UChicago.
[310] Ibid.

methodological, and organizational influences that would later shape his approach to Smithsonian urgent anthropology. Foremost among these was the development of his theory of action anthropology, which argued for an integration of the earlier Boasian preoccupation with detached collection of ethnographic data with the more-socially minded interests of anthropologists working on applied projects during the 1930s and '40s. Yet unlike many of these applied pursuits, most of which reflected government interests, especially during World War II, action anthropology aimed to help solve the problems of the community under study. It did so through a method of mutual collaboration and communication, through which the anthropologist could educate and inform the community under observation of different ways to address their social, economic, and political needs.

Similarly, Tax's promotion of action anthropology on an international scale provided an important framework that helped transition the discipline into a new phase. His insistence that scientifically-derived ethnographic data could be used to help societies find solutions to their problems maintained the importance of the Boasian four-field approach even as anthropology expanded into new disciplinary and geographic territories. His broad conception of anthropology as a science that incorporated the views of many different fields, including biology, also shows his willingness to tackle the problems of human society using as many tools as possible, a quality that made him the perfect candidate to spearhead Ripley's interdisciplinary program in urgent anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution.

Yet by the mid-1960s, American anthropology had also begun to take a distinctly radical turn. The hopeful optimism of anthropology's prospects following the war was

replaced with suspicion and concern over the discipline's involvement in government activities. As anthropologist Laura Nader remembers, the fog of ignorance that had covered the campus during her graduate days suddenly lifted, revealing a very different image of the "science of anthropology."[311] "The issues for anthropology," she wrote, "were all there in the 1950s: academic freedom and academic fear, temptation, the funding carrot, red baiting and the McCarthy repression, nuclear power uses for war or peace, and concern for those we study…We saw such happening as extraneous to the study of anthropology. We had bought into the notion of an uncontaminated sample. Suddenly, the picture changed."[312] The notion that anthropology could act as a neutral, value-free science—something Tax had struggled with since the 1940s—was now defunct. Cultural anthropologists could no longer ignore the role they played in contributing to policies that often negatively affected the very societies they had hoped to help. These considerations would likewise influence the development of urgent anthropology and reflect the need for anthropology to find new solutions and methods to respond to the social revolutions of the late-1960s and early 1970s.

[311] Laura Nader, "The Phantom Factor: Impact of the Cold War on Anthropology," in *The Cold War & The University*, ed. André Schiffren (New York: The New Press, 1997), 114.
[312] Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR

Urgency Defined:

Urgent Anthropology and the Center for the Study of Man, 1965-1969

> When we are told that fifty-year-old facts (which cannot be restudied) are not exactly like those described by the present-day observer, we are led to wonder whether it is the anthropological objects which have changed or whether it is anthropology itself which has changed and therefore cannot satisfy itself with the same kinds of answers any more.
>
> —Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Concept of Primitiveness," 1968.[313]

Introduction

This chapter builds on my discussions of Ripley and Tax's personal investments in expanding Smithsonian anthropology by analyzing their efforts to establish a worldwide program in urgent anthropology. With Lévi-Strauss's speech still fresh in their minds and the Institution's anthropologists united for the first time in the Office of Anthropological Research, the conditions were ripe to begin development on a global research initiative that would integrate their plans to bridge anthropology and ecology and organize an international network of scholars with the needs of anthropology as a whole. The ambitious scope of the proposed program, both in terms of its geographic reach and disciplinary breadth, demanded careful coordination and communication between the Smithsonian and all invested to ensure its success. This task proved more difficult than they imagined, as conversations intended to clarify the program's focus ultimately raised new questions about what constituted urgent research. As understandings of urgency expanded to allow for multiple interpretations and

[313] Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Concept of Primitiveness," in *Man the Hunter*, ed. Richard B. Lee and Irven DeVore (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968), 351.

applications, the program consequently struggled to find a secure financial and organizational foothold. In addition, the Smithsonian's attempts to establish a program in urgent anthropology aggravated the existing factionalism within the Institution and caused many in the field to reconsider anthropology's role in confronting the growing number of social, political, and scientific crises emerging in the late-1960s.

The chapter is divided into three major thematic sections. The first section covers the events leading up to and including the Smithsonian's 1966 Conference on Changing Cultures. Organized by Tax to help determine the parameters of urgent anthropological research, the conference revealed early disagreements over the program's fundamental unit of study. Some of its participants, influenced by conversations carried over from the "Man the Hunter" Conference held at the University of Chicago just days prior, argued in favor of a traditional salvage program focused on the documentation of isolated hunter-gatherer cultures who faced physical disappearance. Others, however, viewed urgent anthropology as an opportunity for the discipline to engage in studies of larger, developing societies undergoing rapid political and socio-economic change.

The second section considers how these debates became further complicated as urgent anthropology continued its development outside of the United States. As a result of the program's reliance on Public Law 480 monies in countries such as India, many of its international supporters called into question its preoccupation with salvaging records of so-called primitive cultures. At the same time, escalating Cold War anxieties over the participation of anthropologists in U.S. government-sponsored projects led some to wonder how concerns about urgent tasks differed from those faced by anthropology as a whole. This section contextualizes urgent anthropology within the larger "crisis of

anthropology" that characterized the discipline in the late-1960s, as it struggled to develop new research methods that more closely responded to its changing relationship with its former subjects of study.

Finally, the chapter concludes by returning to the Smithsonian and looks at how the program's expansion on a global scale magnified preexisting tensions within the Smithsonian Office of Anthropology about whether the Institution's staff should concentrate on museum work or more theoretical concerns. With a broader concept of urgency already being articulated by the international community, Ripley and Tax established a separate Center for the Study of Man devoted solely to those tasks relevant to an interdisciplinary approach to human ecology. Concentrated on universal questions about human survival, the story of the Center's formation demonstrates that while understandings about urgent anthropology became increasingly complex, Tax and Ripley's dedication to applying anthropological knowledge to social and scientific problems remained essentially unchanged.

Early Ideas on Urgency

When Ripley first approached the American Anthropological Association in November 1965 to offer the Smithsonian as a center for urgent anthropological research, plans for the program's shape remained largely undetermined. Members of the administration and staff initially imagined the Institution as a training facility for young scholars interested in working with cultures abroad but who lacked formal schooling in

anthropology.[314] Others at the Smithsonian emphasized the need to collaborate with organizations like UNESCO and the WHO to support fieldworkers from non-Western countries where proper training institutions may be unavailable.[315] All agreed the Smithsonian should host a workshop to firmly define the program's objectives. As the new head of Smithsonian anthropology, Tax was given responsibility for organizing the event. After some discussion, he determined the workshop should focus generally on questions of cultural change as a whole, and that the resulting program "must be problem oriented and have a theoretical base." "Flat salvage," he reasoned, was "impossible and wholly unacceptable to the profession."[316] Thus, by expanding the conceptual framework of Ripley's proposed urgent anthropology program to include all cultures undergoing change as well as those perceived to be disappearing, Tax created a program agenda with a nearly limitless scope. This meant that almost any anthropological query could potentially be characterized as urgent and that the varied research interests of the Smithsonian staff could be incorporated under the single budgetary umbrella of urgent anthropology.

Motivated by his own interest in cultivating a worldwide network of anthropologists as well as the global need for fieldwork outlined by Lévi-Strauss, Tax stressed that the planning workshop should include participants from as many different geographic locations as possible. To help encourage international participation and to

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[314] Martha Henderson to Files, "Meeting on Urgent Anthro, Peace Corps, etc.," November 3, 1965, Center for the Study of Man (CSM) Records, box 82, folder: Washington Conference – Genesis, National Anthropological Archives (NAA), Smithsonian Institution, Suitland, MD.
[315] William Sturtevant to Richard Woodbury, "International Committee on Urgent Anthropological and Ethnological Research," October 7, 1965, Priscilla Reining Papers, box 127, folder: Urgent Research in Rapidly Changing Cultures (circa 1965-1966), NAA.
[316] Martha Henderson, "Conference with Sol Tax," January 26, 1966, Records of the Department of Anthropology, U.S. National Museum/National Museum of Natural History, box 11, folder: Woodbury-Tax, NAA.

defray the costs of travel to Washington, he proposed using the excess currencies that had been made available to the Smithsonian through the 1965 amendment to Public Law 480.[317] While Congress intended these grants to be applied to research projects in the participating countries, Ripley and others had used them to fund other travel needs, including attendance at international conferences. The Smithsonian's access to these monies consequently created a substantial resource for funding potential urgent research projects as well as a means for facilitating the global exchange needed to promote world anthropology.

In addition to using PL-480 money, Tax sought to increase the international presence at the Smithsonian workshop by scheduling it between two other conferences likely to attract foreign attendees: the "Man the Hunter" Conference at the University of Chicago and the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES) held in London. This decision had two major consequences. First, it made it possible to combine the use of excess currencies to maximize attendance of anthropologists at more than one conference, which in turn created a critical mass of geographically diverse participants who could react and contribute to conversations held in each location. Second, because of the overlap of participants, the themes and questions from one conference blended into subsequent discussions held at the next venues. This is significant when considering the program planning objectives of the Smithsonian workshop and for understanding some of the long-term tensions over the focus of urgent anthropology.

[317] Martha Henderson to Sol Tax, "Report—especially on foreign currency travel," February 10, 1966, Sol Tax Papers, box 195, folder 3, Special Collections Research Center (SCRC), University of Chicago, Chicago, IL.

Like the Smithsonian conference, "Man the Hunter" resulted from Tax's involvement with the Wenner-Gren Foundation and his investment in shaping postwar anthropology.[318] Organized by anthropologists Richard Lee and Irven DeVore, the conference was designed to reassess the field of hunter-gatherer studies and to help reconcile the findings of archaeologists and physical anthropologists with theories about human evolution coming out of socio-cultural anthropology.[319] By the 1960s, hunter-gatherer scholars influenced by the work of neo-evolutionists Leslie White and especially Julian Steward sought to explain the structure and formation of particular cultural groups by analyzing how environmental systems affected the conditions of their existence. According to White, this could be determined by analyzing human technological capabilities, especially the way people used new tools and techniques to capture and control energy.[320] Steward, on the other hand, focused on questions of human subsistence and emphasized the interplay between environmental and cultural processes in shaping social organization.[321] Because of its material approach to human adaptation, Steward's method of cultural ecology typified most hunter-gatherer studies.[322] Yet one of White's students, Lewis Binford, argued that objects left behind by prehistoric societies could be

[318] As with most Wenner-Gren sponsored conferences, the majority of papers presented at "Man the Hunter" were later collated and published as a single volume. See Richard B. Lee and Irven Devore, ed., *Man the Hunter* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968).
[319] Lee and DeVore were both students of physical anthropologist and primatologist Sherwood Washburn, whose contributions to the modern evolutionary synthesis of the 1940s and 50s sought to bridge understandings of race and human biology with shifting conceptions of human culture and society. For more on Washburn and his influence on Lee and DeVore, see Donna J. Haraway, "Remodeling the Human Way of Life: Sherwood Washburn and the New Physical Anthropology, 1950-1980," in *Bones, Bodies, Behavior: Essays on Biological Anthropology*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 227-242.
[320] For more on White's theory of cultural evolution, see Leslie White, *The Science of Culture: A Study of Man and Civilization* (New York: Grove Press, 1949).
[321] For a collection of essays on Steward's concept of cultural ecology, see Julian Steward, *Theory of Culture Change: the Methodology of Multi-linear Evolution* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973).
[322] Peter Jordan and Vicki Cummings, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology and Anthropology of Hunter-Gatherers*, ed. Vicki Cummings, Peter Jordan, and Marek Zvelebil (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 5.

studied "extrasomatically" (in other words, distinct and separate from human beings) in order to understand similar adaptive processes, and in turn, changing systems of culture.[323] Binford's approach therefore established a model that allowed for cross-cultural analysis among previous social groups as well as the modern-day hunter-gatherers studied by cultural ecologists. "Man the Hunter" was thus devised to help synthesize these approaches and to determine productive paths for future inquiry in the field.

While cited as an important turning point for hunter-gatherer studies, the "Man the Hunter" symposium also reflected some of the issues that would carry over into discussions about the shape and purpose of Smithsonian urgent anthropology. In their introductory remarks to the conference volume, Lee and DeVore noted how one of the primary goals of the conference was to stimulate new research on hunter-gatherers before there were "no hunters left to study."[324] They stressed that even throughout the mid-twentieth century, the hunter-gatherer way of life represented the "most successful and persistent adaptation man has ever achieved" and argued that the study of these communities offered important clues about human evolution on social, cultural, and biological levels.[325] In keeping with Ripley's ideas about the potential benefits of incorporating anthropological perspectives into environmental research, many of the papers at "Man the Hunter" adopted an ecological framework for analyzing the subsistence activities of the societies under study. These papers also conveyed a sense of optimism about how understanding the "essential features of human existence" as

[323] Lewis R. Binford, "Archaeology as Anthropology," *American Antiquity* 28 (Oct. 1962): 218.
[324] Richard B. Lee and Irven DeVore, "Problems in the Study of Hunters and Gatherers," in *Man the Hunter*, 4.
[325] Lee and DeVore, "Problems in the Study of Hunters and Gatherers," 3.

embodied by hunter-gatherer societies might provide clues about how to resolve present day conflicts and questions about human survival. As Lee eloquently reflected nearly thirty years after the conference, "when anthropologists look at hunter-gatherers they are seeking something else: a vision of human life and human possibilities without the pomp and glory, but also without the misery and inequity of state and class society."[326] In other words, the tone of the "Man the Hunter" symposium mirrored the sentiments of urgent research and shared the conviction that studies of cultures undergoing change could reveal universal truths about human nature.

Despite the breadth of disciplines and perspectives included at "Man the Hunter," at the core the symposium remained focused on small, relatively isolated groups of people. In their effort to define what they meant by the category of "hunters," Lee and DeVore struggled to come up with generalizations beyond the tendency of most hunter-gatherers to move around and maintain low populations. As Lee later observed, hunter-gatherer studies became conflated with anthropology's former preoccupation with the search for so-called primitive peoples and the idea that these unique ways of life provided some kind of baseline for the study of human development.[327] In addition, their focus on the concept of the "hunter" during the conference generated further criticisms from the anthropological community about the inherent male bias within the discipline, leading to the publication of several feminist critiques on the absence of women's roles in discussions about human evolution.[328] Although this bias did not explicitly come out in

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[326] Richard B. Lee, "Art, Science, or Politics? The Crisis in Hunter-Gatherer Studies," *American Anthropologist* 94 (1992): 43.
[327] Lee, "Art, Science, or Politics," 32.
[328] See in particular Sally Linton, "Woman Gatherer: Male Bias in Anthropology," in *Women in Cross-Cultural* Perspective, ed. Sue-Ellen Jacobs (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 9-21, and, Frances Dahlberg, ed., *Woman the Gatherer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981). For a historical review of these and other critiques about gender in hunter-gatherer studies, see Kathleen Sterling, "Man the

conversations about the scope of urgent anthropology held at the Smithsonian immediately after "Man the Hunter," it is worth drawing attention to the possibly gendered views that may have influenced ideas about which peoples and behaviors required most immediate study.

For his part, Lévi-Strauss, who delivered the concluding paper at "Man the Hunter," also wrestled with making sense of the connotations behind the term "hunter-gatherer" and acknowledged the ambiguities of treating such societies as somehow pristine populations unaffected by wider political and socio-economic influences. Though intended as a critique of the concept of primitiveness in anthropology, his paper nonetheless echoed much of the same salvage rhetoric he articulated at the 1965 Smithsonian bicentennial and again emphasized the documentation of vanishing cultures for the benefit of future anthropological work. He cautioned his colleagues not to dismiss the findings of previous generations of anthropologists, noting that "what they have seen and recorded is gone and we cannot be sure that we are actually observing the same kind of evidence." "In anthropology, as elsewhere," he continued, "progress will never result from destroying what has been previously achieved but rather from incorporating the past of our sciences into its present and future, enriching the one with the other and turning the whole process into a lasting reality."[329] As a result, he reinforced the idea that hunter-gatherers, as relatively isolated communities, possessed particularly unique sets of habits and behaviors that needed to be preserved and integrated into a larger narrative about human progress. Subsequently, as "Man the Hunter" ended and many of its participants

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Hunter, Woman the Gatherer? The Impact of Gender Studies on Hunter-Gatherer Research (A Retrospective)," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology and Anthropology of Hunter-Gatherers*, ed. Vicki Cummings, Peter Jordan, and Marek Zvelebil (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 151-176.

[329] Lévi-Strauss, "The Concept of Primitiveness," 352.

began their travels to Washington, D.C., ideas about which societies most urgently needed study and to what end were already in the air.

Planning a program in urgent anthropology

The Planning Conference for a Smithsonian Research Program on Changing Cultures took place April 10-12, 1966, just one day after the conclusion of "Man the Hunter." Hosted by the Smithsonian and primarily funded by the Wenner-Gren Foundation, the conference attracted forty-eight anthropologists representing twenty-two countries, many of whom came directly from Chicago or who planned on continuing on to London to attend ICAES the following week. The official purpose of the conference was to discuss the establishment of an international initiative to support fieldwork on changing cultures across the globe.[330] Several of the attendees—including Tax, Margaret Mead, Robert Heine-Geldern, and Joseph Weiner—referred to the scope of the proposed program as an "international anthropological year" and compared it to similar global research endeavors such as the International Geophysical Year and the International Biological Program (IBP).[331] In particular, the inclusion of a Human Adaptability section in the 1962 plans for IBP dedicated to global investigations of human biology demonstrated both the feasibility and need to organize complementary research efforts in other areas of anthropology.

Yet Tax also commented on Human Adaptability's limited focus on topics in human biology and emphasized the need for complementary research in anthropology's

[330] William Sturtevant, "Smithsonian-Wenner-Gren Conference," *Current Anthropology* 8 (Oct. 1967): 356.
[331] Stenographic transcript, "Conference on Smithsonian Research Program on Changing Cultures," April 10, 1966, MS 7045, Smithsonian Conference on Smithsonian Research Program on Changing Cultures, box 1, folder 1, NAA.

other fields. His observation echoed a criticism voiced two years prior by cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead, who had been present during the proposal phase of Human Adaptability. Despite the near-unanimous support for the program indicated by the voting assembly, Mead instead called for a complete rejection of the proposals in favor of a new program based in the social sciences.[332] While the synthesis volumes chronicling the IBP's development attributed her reaction to the "uncertainty" felt by U.S. scientists over the aims of the Program in general, her suggestion, coupled with Tax's deliberate comparison of Human Adaptability to urgent anthropology, offers a more targeted point of analysis. Specifically, it reveals their desire to carve out a place for the behavioral sciences, and especially anthropology, in the Cold War scientific establishment at a time when funding favored developments in the natural sciences. By highlighting the shared priorities between Human Adaptability and urgent anthropology as well as the gaps, Tax extended the same logic justifying the creation of a program in Human Adaptability to one focused on international anthropological research as a whole.

Using these initiatives as a model, Tax emphasized that the program should take place over the course of at least ten years and should concentrate on devising cooperative strategies for studying changing cultures that could be as easily adopted by biologists and political scientists as they could by socio-cultural anthropologists. In addition to working collaboratively across disciplines, he also stressed the need to organize fieldwork at both the local and global level. According to him, this meant encouraging the participation of non-Western anthropologists and fieldworkers who had a personal investment in the

[332] This episode is briefly discussed in E. B. Worthington, ed., *The Evolution of IBP* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 16, and repeated in K. J. Collins and J. S. Weiner, ed., *Human Adaptability: A History and Compendium of Research in the International Biological Programme* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1977), 5-6.

urgent research at hand and who might also have access to additional resources outside of the Smithsonian. As before, he highlighted countries with surplus PL-480 currencies as offering unique opportunities for developing the program's intellectual and organizational footing. [333]

To help brainstorm the program's logistical concerns, Tax broke the participants up into discussion groups and asked them to reflect on pre-circulated background materials written by Lévi-Strauss, Heine-Geldern, and Colombian ethnologist Alicia Dussan de Reichel, all of which described a possible purpose and scope of urgent research. These ultimately led to questions about how to sample data (Should data be collected for the sake of salvage alone or should they be collected with a particular theoretical question or social problem in mind?), the geographic distribution of projects and their regional organization (Which institutions, besides the Smithsonian, will support urgent research within individual countries?), establishing fieldwork training facilities (How will non-anthropologists receive proper training?), and identifying alternative sources of funding (Is there money for this program outside of the United States?).[334]

Of these, the question of sampling proved the most problematic. Prior to the conference, Tax reminded Ripley that reaching agreement on which cultures or anthropological queries most urgently needed study was "probably both impossible and unnecessary."[335] Yet the task of trying to decide whether or not the program should be hypothesis-driven, problem-oriented, or simply salvage-based, forced the conferees to

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[333] Stenographic transcript, "Conference on Smithsonian Research Program on Changing Cultures," April 10, 1966, MS 7045, Smithsonian Conference on Smithsonian Research Program on Changing Cultures, box 1, folder 1, NAA.
[334] Ibid.
[335] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, April 4, 1966, Records of the Department of Anthropology, box 11, folder: Woodbury-Tax, NAA.

consider what made something urgent and whether some projects were, in fact, more urgent than others. Maintaining the position established at "Man the Hunter," Irven DeVore emphasized that any discussion about urgent anthropology inevitably brought to mind hunter-gatherer societies and the importance of studying them as a baseline for understanding specific instances of human adaptation before it was too late.[336] Tax acknowledged that nearly half of the people at the Changing Cultures Conference had attended "Man the Hunter," and as a result many of the participants, especially DeVore and Heine-Geldern, continued to underscore the need to record data from small, cultural isolates. Other participants, however, argued that increased attention should be paid to those parts of the world where communities were foregoing certain traditions and behaviors in order to adapt to the widespread political, social, and economic changes brought on by the end of World War II. M. J. Meggitt called for a distinction between studying "vanishing cultures and vanishing people," noting how some aboriginal communities in Australia were actually increasing in number but were rapidly losing their cultural heritage due to the influence and involvement of Australian administrators in their daily activities.[337] Irawati Karve referenced the complicated case of anthropology in India and the tension between studying the disappearing languages and customs of so-called primitive societies and other local communities whose livelihoods were equally altered by national pressures to industrialize. She also reminded the participants that each group of people—primitive, tribal, or otherwise—offered important insights on the extent of human potential: "That is why I feel," she concluded, "that when we and our governments want to reform, want to do good, shall we pause a little? Shall we say to

[336] Stenographic transcript, "Smithsonian Research Program on Changing Cultures, Planning Conference, Washington, D.C.," April 12, 1966, MS 7045, box 1, folder 3, NAA.
[337] Ibid.

ourselves, is the good we are offering better than what they have already? Haven't we time to wait and make them tell us what good they want? That for me is the urgency of preserving all that is dying out today because there are alternative forms of life which may be useful to us, perhaps today, perhaps later."[338]

Continued conversations about the program's scope and especially its implications for anthropological research in developing parts of the world raised concern among the attendees who worried that some countries might perceive urgent anthropology as a means for reinforcing Western influence abroad. In fact, the day after the meeting, Tax received a tip from AAA President Stephen Boggs who reported that an anonymous participant had circulated a charge against the program, calling it a "screen to cover the collection of information which would be useful to the American Government in those parts of the world to which American Anthropologists could no longer go."[339] Part of this anxiety stemmed from the recent discovery of anthropologists participating in Project Camelot, an American military counterinsurgency project interested in using social scientific data to help predict possible social revolutions in Latin America.[340] The participants also worried about how possible power imbalances in the structure of urgent anthropology might be facilitated by the reliance on PL-480 funds, since those funds had been created as a result of prior economic agreements between food-poor countries and

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[338] Stenographic transcript, "Conference on Smithsonian Research Program on Changing Cultures," April 10, 1966, MS 7045, Smithsonian Conference on Smithsonian Research Program on Changing Cultures, box 1, folder 1, NAA.

[339] Stephen Boggs to Sol Tax, April 13, 1966, CSM Records, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.

[340] As Mark Solovey notes, at six million dollars, Project Camelot would have been the largest social science initiative in U.S. history. It was cancelled, however, after members of the international community expressed concerns about its imperialist implications. See Mark Solovey, "Project Camelot and the 1960s Epistemological Revolution: Rethinking the Politics-Patronage-Social Science Nexus," *Social Studies of Science* 31 (April 2001): 171-206. For a more complete history of the program, see Irving Louis Horowitz, ed., *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot: Studies in the Relationship Between Social Science and Practical Politics* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1967).

the United States. Boggs stressed that if Tax truly intended to develop an international initiative devoted to salvage research, he would need to maintain its political neutrality and affiliate with a clearly international organization "for which the Smithsonian would not qualify."[341] Mindful of distancing urgent anthropology from such negative stigma, Tax emphasized the program's groundings in his openly democratic philosophy of action anthropology and the need to continue clear communication about its objectives in the pages of *Current Anthropology*.[342] He assured Boggs he would honor the opinions of the journal's Associates and use them to develop the program however they saw fit. According to him, this required arranging another conference, this time hosted somewhere in Europe, in order to make it easier for more international anthropologists to participate in the conversation.

Thus by the end of the Smithsonian conference, relatively little headway had been made in determining the actual organization and direction of urgent research. While the majority of the conferees agreed that urgent anthropology was important and officially endorsed the SI's leadership of the program in a resolution drafted at the ICAES, many of them expressed dissatisfaction and confusion with what had been accomplished at the Smithsonian planning conference.[343] In a follow-up with SI anthropologist Eugene Knez, Toichi Mabuchi commented on his overall ambivalence about the conference's outcomes and its ambiguous course of action.[344] George Murdock, who had conducted similar global research efforts through his involvement with the Human Relations Area Files,

[341] Stephen Boggs to Sol Tax, April 21, 1966, CSM Records, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.
[342] Sol Tax to Stephen Boggs, April 25, 1966, CSM Records, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.
[343] Lawrence Krader, "Resolution by the Permanent Council, IUAES," April 19, 1966, CSM Records, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.
[344] Toichi Mabuchi to Eugene Knez, June 6, 1966, CSM Records, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.

was less generous with his criticisms, and pleaded with Paul Fejos's widow, Lita Osmundsen, not to allow the Wenner-Gren Foundation to again "waste large sums of money which might have been devoted to urgent anthropological research to more talk about the desirability of urgent anthropological research."[345] Unimpressed with Tax's assertion that more time ought to be spent discussing the program's possible directions as demanded by the guidelines of action anthropology, Murdock instead characterized Tax as the "high priest of inaction anthropology" and bemoaned his lack of leadership in managing the Smithsonian conference.[346] Osmundsen offered Tax her own concerns, telling him, "I continue to hear mixed and, sorry to say, negative commentary, primarily from symposium participants this summer, who outrightly criticized the Foundation for supporting this. We are very much identified with the program through CA [*Current Anthropology*]."[347]

Members of the Smithsonian Office of Anthropology expressed similar reservations about the conference's failure to produce substantive measures for undertaking urgent research and worried about Tax's capacity to help guide their department. In particular, Chair Richard Woodbury feared Tax's desire to make the Smithsonian a site for world anthropology would leave many of the department's museum activities short staffed and under funded. He considered the conference an unnecessary disruption to the staff's existing workload and an example of Tax's poor planning and ignorance of the Smithsonian's internal functions.[348] Woodbury's attitudes

[345] George Murdock to Lita Osmundsen, April 13, 1966, CSM Records, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.
[346] George Murdock to Stephen Boggs, May 3, 1966, CSM Records, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.
[347] Lita Osmundsen to Sol Tax, October 3, 1966, Sol Tax Papers, box 208, folder 2, SCRC, UChicago.
[348] Richard Woodbury to Sidney Galler, "Available internal support of anthropology programs," April 20, 1966, CSM Records, 1966-1982, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.

toward the conference and Tax were largely colored by the continued growing pains of the Smithsonian Office of Anthropology and the persistent tensions between the former Bureau of American Ethnology members and those anthropologists originally hired by the Department. While most SI staff members chose to remain detached from the Smithsonian conference, former BAE curator William Sturtevant embraced the international research possibilities promised by urgent research and played an integral role in helping Tax by managing correspondence with participants and by drafting a detailed summary report of the conference later published in *Current Anthropology*. He defended Tax against criticisms coming from outside the Institution, sharing with George Murdock his enthusiasm for Tax's leadership and his feeling that "anthropology was in real danger of dying here; but…the future looks much brighter because of his efforts."[349] For his own part, Tax assured Woodbury that he had no interest in an official leadership position at the Smithsonian, but rather saw there a true opportunity to cultivate the human sciences in response to the changing needs of the postwar world:

> Once…Wigner, Fermi, and others accepted a wartime challenge and produced the nuclear reaction. Those of us who think that the Human Sciences are important have been waiting for some equivalent effort. The world in this case is the laboratory; and the organization of research on the broadest scale is a major necessity for any real breakthrough. The Smithsonian Institution, with its information exchange, the counterpart currencies, its reputation, and long tradition is the best bet to make the breakthrough in our lifetimes.[350]

He urged Woodbury and the rest of the SOA to overcome the administrative problems and factionalism facing the department in order to consider the possibilities that could be achieved through the Smithsonian's leadership of an international program for urgent research.

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[349] William Sturtevant to George Murdock, May 5, 1966, CSM Records, box 98, folder: Washington Conference, Follow-Up, NAA.
[350] Sol Tax to Richard Woodbury, February 9, 1966, Sol Tax Papers, box 197, folder 11, SCRC, UChicago.

Despite the misgivings articulated by Woodbury and others, by the beginning of 1967 the Smithsonian's urgent anthropology program was in full swing. Although the SOA's budget left little money to support new large-scale research efforts, pre-existing projects organized by SI curators Eugene Knez, T. Dale Stewart, William Crocker, Clifford Evans, and Betty Meggers on culture change in parts of Korea, Argentina, Chile, and Brazil demonstrated a clear need for increased financial support of urgent projects.[351] Recognizing this need, in early 1967 the Wenner-Gren Foundation agreed to match Smithsonian funds and provided $10,000 towards a small-grants program supporting urgent anthropological research.[352] The availability of small-grants had three important advantages. First and foremost, it made the logistics of carrying out urgent anthropology a reality and not simply a topic of discussion. Second, because of the relatively small amount of money awarded, it encouraged researchers to seek additional funding from regional institutions and to work collaboratively with other investigators in the area. Lastly, the grants provided training opportunities in anthropology in parts of the world where the discipline was still professionalizing. This made it possible to increase both the quality and quantity of fieldwork within these regions while also respecting the autonomy of the country under study.

With funding for urgent anthropology finally secured, Tax hired two assistants, Samuel Stanley and Priscilla Reining, to stay at the Smithsonian full time to oversee the program's activities. Though Tax had agreed to help direct the Smithsonian's new

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[351] Sol Tax to Sidney Galler, "Funds urgently needed for special program," September 29, 1966, Assistant Secretary for Science Records, Record Unit 108, box 7, folder: Urgent Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

[352] Lita Osmundsen to Sol Tax, February 1, 1967, Grant # 2077, folder: Smithsonian Institution, Urgent Research Project, Office of Anthropology (through Dr. Sol Tax), Washington, D.C. – to aid general program of cooperative field work in rapidly changing cultures, Wenner-Gren Foundation, Inc., New York, NY.

programs as part of his 1965 appointment, he also stipulated that he would retain his teaching position at the University of Chicago, making trips to D.C. and to conference locations as needed. He appointed Stanley, a former PhD student at Chicago, as program coordinator for the SOA and put Reining, who at the time was finishing her own doctorate in anthropology at Chicago, in charge of managing urgent anthropology. Reining and Stanley thus received the bulk of the responsibility for enacting Tax's agenda for Smithsonian anthropology and for guiding the direction of urgent research from Washington.

Two Types of Urgency

As a follow-up to some of the questions that had arisen during the 1966 Smithsonian conference, Tax asked Reining to conduct a survey among the associate members of *Current Anthropology* to assess the program's scope. To do this, Reining collected responses from over nine hundred anthropologists worldwide, summarizing their feedback in a 1967 report that included an attached catalogue of possible urgent research topics. In addition to associate replies, she accounted for urgent research projects outlined or suggested in back issues of Heine-Geldern's *Bulletin of the International Committee of Anthropological and Ethnological Research*. Her findings confirmed the disparity of opinions on appropriate areas for urgent research first articulated at the Smithsonian, though she noted how the replies often represented the research interests and expertise of the individual, making it impossible to rank suggested areas of study in order of their urgency. As before, the survey also demonstrated the perception that all cultures—be they small, isolated communities or larger, rapidly developing

populations—were changing and that the majority of the world's anthropologists recognized a need to greatly increase the discipline's fieldwork efforts. Yet a number of these replies similarly questioned how urgent anthropology differed from the aims of anthropology overall. "Each person using the catalogue," Reining wrote, "must decide for himself whether the urgent anthropology contained there is readily to be distinguished from anthropology in general. The line is not easy to draw and no attempt has been made here to devise a definition of urgent anthropology within which certain recommendations fall and others do not."[353] Others asked if perhaps the program should be used as an opportunity to devise new strategies for anthropological research: "This current emphasis on ethnographic salvage may crystallize the problem of anthropology's identity; i.e. what is anthropology if the subjects of traditional investigation disappear. Such a direct and full scale discussion of anthropology's role is necessary and over-due."[354]

The question of urgent anthropology's purpose and its relation to the discipline as a whole became a central point of discussion during two subsequent conferences held in 1968. The first of these, organized by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study in Simla, India, concentrated specifically on what urgent anthropological research meant within an Indian context and as a result took to task the initiative's preoccupation with the idea of so-called primitive, vanishing cultures. Though the participants expressed a degree of sympathy towards the salvage objective of preserving a total record of humankind, they ultimately questioned the theoretical benefit of such an exercise and its value for Indian anthropologists who were more interested in making sense of the multi-layered processes

[353] Priscilla Reining, "Urgent Research Projects," *Current Anthropology* 8 (Oct. 1967): 362.
[354] Reining, "Urgent Research Projects," 363.

of social and economic change taking place within their country.[355] They identified a distinction between the traditionally pure scientific interests of Western anthropology and the application of anthropological knowledge of India's different tribal and caste systems towards developing strategies for guiding the country's development following its 1947 independence.[356] At the end of the Simla conference, they called for the Indian government to pay more attention to the possible contributions anthropologists could make in drafting national policy and urged the increased involvement of both government and academic institutions in supporting Indian participation in urgent anthropology.[357]

Conversations about the two types of urgent research identified at Simla continued several months later, this time as part of a working group on urgent anthropology sponsored by the VIII ICAES held in Tokyo. Attended by about half the number of participants who had traveled to the Smithsonian conference (approximately twenty five instead of the previous forty eight), the workshop began with an assessment of the state of urgent anthropological research since 1966. It also opened with a short memorial dedicated to the life and scholarly contributions of Robert von Heine-Geldern, who passed away in May 1968. From the start, it was clear that relatively little progress had been made in refining the purpose of urgent anthropology since the Smithsonian conference and that divisions still existed between those scholars seeking to honor the

[355] This is particularly well articulated in the opening address delivered by Indian historian Niharranjan Ray. See Niharranjan Ray, "Introductory Address," *Urgent Research in Social Anthropology* (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1968), 17-26.
[356] This also became an important focus for the Anthropological Survey of India (ASI) beginning in the 1950s. See K. S. Singh, ed., *The History of the Anthropological Survey of India: Proceedings of a Seminar* (Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India, 1991). For more on the development of social anthropology in India, see Patricia Uberoi, Nandini Sundar, and Satish Deshpande, eds., *Anthropology in the East: Founders of Indian Sociology and Anthropology* (Ranikhet, India: Permanent Black, 2007).
[357] "Draft Resolutions of the Conference on Urgent Research in Social Anthropology in India held at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, July 15- July 20, 1968," Priscilla Reining Papers, box 128, folder: India (circa 1968), NAA.

more orthodox and scientific approach to urgent research and those who viewed it as an opportunity to engage with the political and social challenges of the period. In an effort to accommodate these dual perspectives, Tax outlined an agenda for what he termed "balanced priorities" for urgent anthropology, identifying two distinct types. He defined Type I urgent research along the lines established by Heine-Geldern, describing it as concerned with recording the livelihoods of "those societies which are characterized by a very close relationship with nature."[358] This category covered research topics specifically focused on analyzing instances of human adaptation and the documentation of smaller, isolated communities in danger of physical extinction, whose social structures and behaviors were consistent with contemporary understandings of hunter-gatherers. Type II urgent anthropology, on the other hand, mirrored the interests exemplified by the Indian anthropologists and highlighted the need to study "peasant societies" undergoing rapid cultural loss and change, but whose members did not face physical disappearance.[359]

According to Tax, both types demanded equal attention from anthropologists and could be studied congruently by employing common strategies (for example the use of cinema cameras and the creation of accessible archives) for recording and storing ethnographic data. To facilitate this, the participants agreed more effort should be made to increase the number of anthropologists in regions with both types of urgent anthropological problems. Incidentally, these tended to occur in locations with the greatest deficit of trained professionals. One participant suggested pairing local graduate students with established scholars on Type I projects, which would allow the student to receive proper ethnographic training, in turn making him or her "more valuable to their

[358] Priscilla Reining, "Report of the Working Group at the Tokyo Congress," *Current Anthropology* 10 (Oct. 1969): 372.
[359] Ibid.

own country in studying Type II problems."[360] The workgroup emphasized however that all anthropologists coming from outside, particularly those from Western countries, needed to be mindful of the "national relevance" of urgent anthropological problems and that even in cases of Type I urgent anthropology, the scientific and theoretical value of a given project "must be apparent to those who make decisions about the allocation of resources."[361] The burden of developing urgent anthropology therefore needed to be shifted away from a single organizational body, such as the Smithsonian, and redistributed to regional centers in specific countries where access to funding and personnel could more easily be attained.

Though not discussed at length during the workshop, questions about funding, and in particular the Smithsonian's reliance on PL-480 funds for urgent research, weighed heavy in the minds of the participants. As with the 1966 Changing Cultures Conference, the Smithsonian had promised to provide travel assistance to international participants traveling to Tokyo via countries with available counterpart currencies. Following the publication of Reining's 1967 report in *Current Anthropology*, it had become quite clear that of all the places with excess funds, India offered the richest and most diverse opportunities for urgent research. Yet in a note to SI Foreign Currency Program Director Kennedy Schmertz, Sam Stanley reminded him that using PL-480 funds to support collaborations between American and Indian scholars remained a delicate process, and the only sure way to secure the use of such funding was through

[360] Transcript, "Urgent Anthropological Session, VIIIth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, September 5, 1968, Tokyo," MS 7051, Smithsonian Institution, Center for the Study of Man, box 1, folder 1, NAA.
[361] Priscilla Reining, "Report of the Working Group at the Tokyo Congress," 373.

good personal relations between the Smithsonian and Indian institutions.[362] While Ripley had developed successful inroads for ecological research in India through his relationship with Salim Ali (see chapter 1), the Smithsonian's anthropologists had no such connection or senior scholar working with the SOA. Tax, Stanley, and Reining hoped to cultivate such ties by sponsoring the participation of six Indian anthropologists at the 1968 Tokyo meeting of the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, with the Smithsonian covering the travel costs to and from the conference and Wenner-Gren paying for their accommodations.[363] Unfortunately, just a few weeks prior, the Indian Ministry of Finance decided not to allow the Smithsonian to use PL-480 rupees to purchase the necessary airfare. In a later conversation with Reining, M. N. Srinivas explained that the Indian government viewed the PL-480 account as an inordinately large source of credit that had the potential to lead to economic inflation if used to excess and did not want to set a precedent by allowing its use for international travel.[364] It is likely that the Indian government may also have denied the use of the funds as part of their reaction against the Himalayan Border Countries Project, which, like Project Camelot, applied U.S. Defense Department dollars to fund social science research in the region.[365] Regardless of the actual reason behind the decision, the Indian ethnologists held the Smithsonian accountable for their inability to attend the Tokyo Congress. Many of them

[362] Samuel Stanley to Kennedy Schmertz, "Request for Funds for Urgent Anthropology Research Development Project in India," September 29, 1967, Records of the Department of Anthropology, Series 26: Urgent Anthropology Program, box 19, folder: Urgent Anthro, India, NAA.
[363] Priscilla Reining to Kenneth and Elsie Copeland, September 14, 1968, Priscilla Reining Papers, box 128, folder: Trip 1 – 22 Sept. 1968, NAA.
[364] Priscilla Reining to Sol Tax, September 25, 1968, Priscilla Reining Papers, box 128, folder: India (circa 1968), NAA.
[365] The potential counterinsurgency applications of the project had be brought to the attention of Indian administrators by University of California anthropologist Gerald Berreman, who withdrew from the project in light of the escalating conflict in Southeast Asian and especially Vietnam. That same year, Berreman wrote a piece highlighting the moral obligation of anthropologists in taking a stance against wartime research. See Gerald D. Berreman, "Is Anthropology Alive?: Social Responsibility in Social Anthropology," *Current Anthropology* 9 (Dec. 1968): 391-396.

expressed their annoyance with having to rush to attain proper documentation before the trip and having to pay out of pocket to arrive in New Delhi to catch their flight, only then to discover the tickets had been cancelled. One of the six, Samir Ghosh, even wrote to the Smithsonian and to Wenner-Gren asking for compensation for the "expenses involved, embarrasement [s*ic*], [and] wastage of time and energy" he had endured because of the error.[366] Instead of cultivating goodwill among Indian anthropologists by means of foreign currencies, this event effectively made it even less certain that such funding sources would be available to the Institution's anthropologists in the future.

Consequently, after nearly three years of trying to set up a program for urgent anthropology, Tax had yet to succeed. In a conversation with Reining, Lita Osmundsen revealed her disappointment, noting she had "very little hope much could be accomplished by Tax in another conference" and that if he failed to get organized soon it would be up to Wenner-Gren to do something about urgent anthropology.[367] Her comments to Reining also conveyed some irritation with the small-grants funding structure that had been established between Wenner-Gren and the Smithsonian, and pointed out that it was not in her interest to "butter the SI bread" with the Foundation's money.[368] Along similar lines, Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth offered his own assessment about Tax's continued attempts to organize urgent research via the Institution:

> Perhaps the Smithsonian, and U.S. Government dollars, are not the answer. But how else then can we make a start on setting up more effective structures for the task of urgent anthropology? A breakthrough here would mean more for the development of the discipline right now than any amount of theoretical

[366] Samir K. Ghosh to Kenneth D. Whitehead, September 11, 1968, Smithsonian Institution, Grant Records, 1965-1973, Record Unit 180, box 7, folder: Urgent anthropology trip to India [folder 2], SIA.
[367] Priscilla Reining, "Notes on Tokyo Conference," Priscilla Reining Papers, box 128, folder: Trip 1-22 Sept. 1968, NAA.
[368] Ibid.

> innovation, and you are in a better position to promote it than anyone else I know.[369]

As Barth's note shows, despite the lack of success in getting urgent anthropology off the ground, many still viewed Tax as the only person who could possibly see the program come to fruition. Perhaps with this in mind, the general assembly of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) at Tokyo elected him to serve as its next president. This, they suggested, would provide Tax with a unique opportunity to unite the internationalist objectives of the IUAES with the world network of anthropologists subscribed to *Current Anthropology*.[370] They determined he would conclude his presidency by hosting the ninth annual ICAES meeting at the University of Chicago in 1973, where they would again discuss the state of global anthropological research and its relation to the discipline's needs. As a result of this decision, by the end of 1968 Tax held leadership positions in all three major organizations with investments in urgent anthropology: the IUAES, Wenner-Gren, and the Smithsonian. With these infrastructures in place, his stakes in developing a global program for urgent research were higher than ever.

A Third Type of Urgency: Anthropology in Crisis

Yet perhaps the real difficulty in gaining a secure footing for urgent anthropology had less to do with Tax's leadership capabilities and more to do with the challenges confronting the discipline as a whole. In her reactions to the Tokyo workshop, Irawati Karve identified a third "type" of urgent anthropology that had begun to take shape

[369] Fredrik Barth to Sol Tax, July 19, 1968, Sol Tax Papers, box 193, folder 9, SCRC, UChicago.
[370] Lawrence Krader, "International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences: Report of the Secretary General," *Current Anthropology* 10 (Oct. 1969): 469-470.

during discussions about the initiative's scope and that she felt had become mixed into debates about its different scientific and political responsibilities. According to her, the urgency of preserving certain cultural records and identifying unexplored areas for future fieldwork had been superseded by an overwhelming desire to reorient or redefine anthropology in response to "the era of human conflicts."[371] As the social and political tensions of the late-1960s, and especially the war in Vietnam, continued to escalate around them, anthropologists—particularly cultural and social anthropologists—had become increasingly uncomfortable with their participation in government projects and their discipline's newfound identity as the "handmaiden of colonialism."[372] Highlighted in texts such as Dell Hymes's *Reinventing Anthropology* and Talal Asad's *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*, many in the field began calling for a fundamental shift in how anthropology approached its subject of study, demanding a move away from the discipline's foundations as an empirical science and steps towards a practice grounded in human interaction and theoretical reflection.[373] This "reflexive turn," as it is now called, became cemented in the late 1980s with the publication of James Clifford's and George Marcus's *Writing Culture*, which examined the personal biases and processes that anthropologists may unknowingly incorporate within their discussions of other

[371] Irawati Karve, "What 'Urgent Anthropology' means to me," *Bulletin of the International Committee on Urgent Anthropological and Ethnological Research*, no. 10 (1968): 15.
[372] Though this term was popularized Talal Asad's *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*, anthropologist and historian of anthropology Herb Lewis traces the origins of this idea to a talk given by Kathleen Gough at the 1967 AAA meeting entitled "Anthropology and Imperialism." According to Lewis, while professional anthropologists actually played a rather trivial (though not exempt) role in the long history of colonial subjugation, the rhetorical power of linking anthropology's wartime and counterinsurgency activities within this narrative perfectly matched the revolutionary tone of the period. See Herbert Lewis, "Was Anthropology the Child, the Tool, or the Handmaiden of Colonialism?" in *In Defense of Anthropology: An Investigation of the Critique of Anthropology* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2014), 102.
[373] See essays collected in Dell Hymes, ed., *Reinventing Anthropology* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972) and in Talal Asad, ed. *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (London: Ithaca Press, 1973).

cultures.[374] Yet as Matti Bunzl suggests, this later textual and disciplinary transformation was preceded by a series of epistemological and political changes that began in the 1960s, partially as a reaction against positivist forms of inquiry and partially as a result of limited access to new sites for fieldwork in the wake of decolonization.[375] For both intellectual and practical reasons, anthropologists could no longer conduct ethnographies the way they had before the war. As anthropologists Anna Grimshaw and Keith Hart explain, prior to World War II, the main contribution and expertise of anthropologists "rested on reporting the activities of unknown peoples to both lay and academic audiences at home… they knew the other and their readers did not."[376] Yet as they point out, the integration of the world following the war made such expertise unnecessary and even redundant: "In a world of television, credit cards, and mass travel, the idea that genealogical charts offer a sure guide to social structure is, to say the least, unconvincing."[377] While anthropologists struggled to find relevance in the postwar era, as Bunzl notes, "the crisis of anthropology posed the question of ethics and politics in newly urgent terms."[378] The anthropologist could no longer play the role of the detached observer, but how to apply the discipline's traditional methods towards more activist ends remained uncertain.

The difficulty in establishing a unified front for urgent anthropological research therefore makes more sense when positioned within the context of the discipline's period of crisis. Whether aimed at salvaging records of disappearing societies or documenting

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[374] See James Clifford and George E. Marcus, ed., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1986).
[375] Matti Bunzl, "Anthropology Beyond Crisis: Toward an Intellectual History of the Extended Present," *Anthropology and Humanism* 30 (2005): 188.
[376] Anna Grimshaw and Keith Hart, *Anthropology and the Crisis of the Intellectuals* (Cambridge: Prickly Pear Press, 1996), 9.
[377] Ibid., 9-10.
[378] Bunzl, "Anthropology Beyond Crisis," 190.

the changing lifeways of developing nations, at its core urgent anthropology remained an endeavor concerned with the collection and storage of ethnographic data. Thus well into the early 1970s, the associate members of *Current Anthropology* continued to debate definitions of urgency, as well as the appropriateness of pursuing such research at all. One associate considered urgent anthropology's preoccupation with studying "traditional societies" dangerous to the "New Anthropology" beginning to take form. According to this associate, what was really urgent for anthropology was to "get rid of those who are interested in Urgent Anthropology – and quickly."[379] Others seemed to agree with this position, calling the very idea behind the program a form of "neo-colonialism" and that it was time for anthropology to be a "science of man for men, not a science for science."[380] Still others argued that all of anthropology could be considered urgent and that such squabbling needed to be set aside in light of the pressing needs of human survival. "A third form of urgent anthropology—most urgent of all to me," one associate suggested, "is the need to bring anthropological knowledge and resources to bear on the problems of pollution, extinction, etc. If man himself does not survive, there will be no need for anthropology, urgent or otherwise."[381]

Ever diplomatic with expressing his own views in the journal, Tax echoed this last point and similarly identified a third task for urgent anthropology. In addition to studying both disappearing and rapidly changing societies, he argued in favor of the urgent task of "educating people, including other scientists and engineers, in the anthropological points of view needed both to make programs of modernization more effective and to ameliorate

[379] Priscilla Reining, "Current Anthropology: Associates' Views on the Definition of 'Urgency,'" *Current Anthropology* 12 (April 1971): 243.
[380] Reining, "Associates' Views on the Definition of 'Urgency,'" 246-247.
[381] Ibid.

their negative human consequences."[382] In other words, he again hoped to employ the basic strategies that defined his method of action anthropology. As with his plans for Smithsonian anthropology, he argued for the importance of developing a widely conceived program of urgent anthropology that encompassed the entirety of the human sciences and encouraged the readership of *Current Anthropology* to "accept all reasonable definitions of urgency and seek support for the study of the widest variety of urgent problems."[383]

Expanding Urgency: Establishing a Center for the Study of Man

At the same time that the global community of anthropologists worked to make sense of the conflicts affecting the field as a whole, members of the Smithsonian Office of Anthropology continued to struggle with the persistent tensions caused by the 1964 merger. Faced with monetary restraints due to the redistribution of government funds in support of the war effort in Vietnam, in 1967 the administration slashed the SOA's research budget by nearly $100,000 for the upcoming year.[384] As a result of this cutback, awards for individual staff research projects (incidentally all of whom were former members of the Department) were rejected in favor of funding existing long-range programs. At the time, these included an archeology-based program on the study of ancient technologies, a revision to the Handbook of North American Indians headed by Sturtevant, and the urgent anthropology organized by Stanley and Reining with supplementary funds from Wenner-Gren. To further expand and support the objectives of

[382] Reining, "Associates' Views on the Definition of 'Urgency,'" 243.
[383] Ibid.
[384] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Budgetary Dilemma of Fiscal Year 1968," July 19, 1967, RU 108, box 7, folder: Tax, Sol, Contract, University of Chicago, SIA.

these programs, Tax recommended allocating all remaining money towards the development of new archives and catalogues where the results of anthropological research could be consolidated and stored for future use.[385] He recognized, however, that the development of such programs could only happen if museum needs continued to be met and articulated this fact to both Secretary Ripley and Assistant Secretary of Science Sidney Galler.[386] Despite Tax's intended role as a unifier of the SOA's activities, his interest in cultivating world anthropology found strong resistance from members of the staff who, especially in light of recent budget cuts, worried about the impact Tax's international programs would have on museum operations. Prior to stepping down as Chair, Richard Woodbury warned his successor, Saul Riesenberg, that while he could "understand the desirability of securing funds for urgent anthropology, and of associating ourselves with stimulating anthropologists all across the country" the department needed to be "more realistic in recognizing the effect that these things are having and will have in the future on our own individual research activities. Old-fashioned as it may seem, we may find that we can't have it both ways."[387]

With these kinds of criticisms in mind, Tax proposed the creation of a separate entity that would more closely resemble the kind of international, interdisciplinary epicenter for anthropology he and Ripley had envisioned at the time of his 1965 appointment. Originally described as a Center for International Research, he quickly reconceived it as a Center for the Study of Man and recommended it be placed directly

[385] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Progress Report for Office of Anthropology," July 18, 1967, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, "USA 200" Bi-Centennial Projects, NAA.
[386] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Budgetary Dilemma of Fiscal Year 1968," July 19, 1967, RU 108, box 7, folder: Tax, Sol, Contract, University of Chicago, SIA; Sol Tax to Sidney Galler, "Office of Anthropology Budget for FY 68," August 23, 1967, RU 108, box 7, folder: Tax, Sol, Contract, University of Chicago, SIA.
[387] Richard Woodbury to Saul Riesenberg, "Basic Needs of SOA," October 19, 1967, CSM Records, box 132, folder: Smithsonian Office of Anthropology, SOA Bulletin, NAA.

under the central administration of Ripley and Galler. By including the Center under their administration, he argued it could maintain an independent budget that would not interfere with the museum functions of the Office of Anthropology and would allow it to host programs that complemented but did not duplicate the research of the Institution's museum anthropologists. Most importantly, he hoped the promise of the Center's open intellectual environment would attract top scholars to the Smithsonian and would finally make it possible to organize long-term research projects in the human sciences. "The time has come," he wrote to Ripley, "to separate out the 'dreamers' and give them the atmosphere they need."[388]

On Tax's suggestion, Ripley organized an ad hoc committee to review the functions of the SOA and to assess the need for a new center. The committee's findings confirmed the divisive influence of maintaining both museum and non-museum research programs within a single budgetary structure and, like Tax, they advised creating a distinct department supporting broader long-range projects that would strengthen the Smithsonian's position as a center for modern-day anthropological research.[389] While they acknowledged the Institution's primary contribution to museums and public education, they argued that the relationship between exhibits and research was asymmetrical in that it was "difficult to conceive of good exhibits that do not draw upon and illustrate the best of current research while research is improved only marginally and in special circumstances by the involvement of its practitioners also in the preparation of

[388] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Smithsonian Office of Anthropology Program," December 19, 1967, Sol Tax Papers, box 196, folder 2, SCRC, UChicago.
[389] Robert McCormick Adams, Ward H. Goodenough, Floyd G. Loundsbury, and Sherwood Washburn, "Report of the Advisory Committee on Anthropology," as included in Richard Cowan to Dillon Ripley, May 10, 1968, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man, #2, SIA.

exhibits."[390] In other words, they noted a disparity between the current research interests of the majority of the staff members and the quality of the anthropological exhibits found in the Museum of Natural History. With this in mind, they suggested an "Office of Man" should concentrate on projects that would contribute to the construction of exhibits reflecting modern-day concerns and add to the general body of anthropological knowledge. To that end, they also advised the ultimate goal of the Center should be to oversee the construction of a new Museum of Man, which would "bring together in an integrated fashion all of the Smithsonian's research and collections on man's environmental setting and biological and cultural heritage."[391] This last objective in particular reflected Ripley's initial plans to bridge Smithsonian anthropology and ecology within the museum and his rationale for bringing Tax on board as his advisor for anthropology in the first place. The Center's instrumental role in establishing a Museum of Man would serve as a primary justification for maintaining its operations well into the 1970s despite multiple program failures—a topic I will return to in the next chapter.

In July 1968, Ripley officially re-divided the Office of Anthropology into the Department of Anthropology and the Center for the Study of Man.[392] Although the advisory committee had recommended hiring a new director who could manage the Center full-time, Ripley appointed Tax as its acting director and assigned Sam Stanley as Program Coordinator. In addition to overseeing planning for a Museum of Man, those programs that had received priority in the 1967 SOA budget (the ancient technologies program, the Handbook project, and urgent anthropology) were reassigned to the Center.

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[390] Ibid.
[391] Ibid.
[392] Saul Riesenberg to Dillon Ripley, "Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Anthropology," April 1, 1968, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man, #2, SIA.

Tax also proposed several provisional programs for the Center, including the development of both an anthropological film and manuscript archive and the creation of a worldwide anthropological exchange program incorporating the publication of *Current Anthropology*.[393]

While the list of programs did not differ significantly from what had previously been included as part of the SOA, descriptions of the new Center characterized it as an interdisciplinary endeavor extending well beyond anthropology. According to the Center's official press release, it would "serve the needs of SI staff and scholars from outside whose interests lie in anthropology, archaeology, human ecology and other fields concerned with appraising man's interrelationship with his physical, biological, and cultural environment."[394] Yet the announcement also revealed the extent to which the Center's focus relied on changing ideas about the utility of anthropology and borrowed heavily from continued discussions about the contributions of urgent anthropological research. Opening with the same excerpt from Lévi-Strauss's 1965 speech credited with inspiring the Smithsonian's urgent anthropology program, the press release linked rhetoric about the importance of documenting disappearing cultures with more general concerns about human survival. Featured quotes included a comment from Tax on how the "problems of man are universal" and that it would not be an exaggeration to say that "the very future of the world depends on getting a better understanding of man." An excerpt from Ripley's 1967 Annual Report similarly noted how the "single area which needs the greatest amount of attention from discoverers is that uncharted and almost unknown field which might be called social biology." The announcement concluded with

[393] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Program of the Center for the Study of Man," July 24, 1968, CSM Papers, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Center for the Study of Man (cont'd), NAA.
[394] "Center Formed for the Study of Man," *Smithsonian Torch*, no. 9 (Sept. 1968): 1.

a quote from Stanley, who remarked, "We find ourselves today in a rapidly changing world. If value systems evolve out of solutions to problems, and if you suddenly solve a long-standing, really vexing problem of man, the effect on values can be profound."[395] The deliberate connection between Lévi-Strauss's speech and these quotes from Tax, Ripley, and Stanley shows the extent to which ideas about urgent anthropology had been conflated and expanded upon since the 1965 Smithson Bicentennial. Moreover, the language used in this announcement demonstrates that while urgent anthropology may have been listed as its own program, in some ways all of the Center's activities could be perceived as urgent research.

The ties between the Center's goals and the ever-expanding urgent anthropology program became particularly clear following the 1968 Tokyo Conference. To help support the Center's global focus, Tax insisted its membership include prominent anthropologists from the international community as well as Smithsonian staff.[396] Of its initial eighteen members (not including Stanley and Tax), five were from institutions outside of the United States.[397] Additionally, over half of the Center's total members had been involved with one if not all of the planning conferences on urgent anthropology. The majority of the Center's members were therefore keenly aware of the conversations that had taken place at Tokyo about the different definitions of urgency and about continued fears that a global program in urgent anthropology might be viewed as a front

[395] "Center Formed for the Study of Man," 1.
[396] The initial membership for the CSM consisted of Henry Collins, John Ewers, T. Dale Steward, and Waldo Wedel as SI-based "senior advisors," Gordon Gibson, Robert Laughlin, and William Sturtevant as SOA Staff, SI primatologist John Napier, MHT Chair of American Studies Wilcomb Washburn, and Dell Hymes, Douglas Schwartz, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Surijit Sinha, S. N. Srinivas, George Stocking, Sherwood Washburn, Chie Nakane, and Fredrik Barth as non-SI Members. For the complete list, see Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Meeting of the Center for the Study of Man," May 15, 1969, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man (folder 1), SIA.
[397] This number increased to six with the addition of Laila El Hamamsy following the May 1969 meeting.

for neo-colonialism.[398] This concern was augmented in early 1969 when Lita Osmundsen, unhappy with the outcomes of Tokyo and convinced that the Smithsonian's involvement was jeopardizing urgent anthropology's success, discontinued Wenner-Gren's funding support of the Institution's small-grants program.[399] This in turn influenced the decision to hire Priscilla Reining to continue the management of the existing urgent anthropology grants as part of the Center's initial programming.

In light of these developments, Tax wondered if perhaps the Center for the Study of Man should become involved in directing a wider scope of urgent anthropological research, referencing his own views on urgency later published in the October 1969 issue of *Current Anthropology*. Yet upon reflecting on the Center's goals, Tax deemed even this set as "too narrow." "There are pressing problems in our modern world," he wrote, "to which a Center for the Study of Man must, it seems of necessity, address itself. In particular I would point to the three major, interrelated problems of our time: War in a nuclear age – The Population spiral – The growing Pollution of our planet."[400] He summarized these three problems as those affecting the "survival of the species in its total environment" and categorized them as part of the study of human ecology.[401] As before, he emphasized how anthropologists needed to cooperate with scholars from other fields, but that it was equally important for anthropology as a discipline to coordinate itself on a global scale. "In order <u>to do anything at all</u>," he argued, "it is clear that we must organize world anthropology beyond any conception that we have today and we should propose to

[398] Meeting Minutes, Center for the Study of Man, February 14, 1969, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Museum of Man, NAA.
[399] Lita Osmundsen to Samuel Stanley, February 1, 1969, Grant # 2077, folder: Smithsonian Institution, Urgent Research Project, Office of Anthropology (through Dr. Sol Tax), Washington, D.C. – to aid general program of cooperative field work in rapidly changing cultures, Wenner-Gren.
[400] Sol Tax, "A Modest Proposal," as included in Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, April 7, 1969, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Center for the Study of Man (cont'd), NAA.
[401] Ibid.

use the newest technology in a quick effort to bring this about."[402] Such technologies, he suggested, included computers and other data banks where bibliographies and other inventories could be maintained and updated to reflect the most up-to-date, cumulative set of anthropological knowledge. In effect, what Tax was proposing was itself a kind of salvage endeavor, only instead of collecting information about disappearing cultures, he sought to document and store anything relevant to anthropology overall.

The broad objective Tax identified for the Center, however, came into conflict with the programming that had initially prompted its 1968 establishment. He expressed to Galler and Ripley his opinion that the current collection of programs had been incorporated into the Center ad hoc and did not truly reflect its international, interdisciplinary scope.[403] According to him, the only exception was urgent anthropology, and even this needed to be reorganized to more closely engage with major problems in the human sciences.[404] The rest of the programming (i.e. the Handbook, ancient technologies) reflected the interests of individual members who had brought them to the Center as a way of removing them from the factionalism found within the former SOA, even though in practice they had very little to do with international or interdisciplinary work. Galler agreed with Tax and urged Ripley to help redirect the Center's programs prior to its first full planning meeting.[405] He reminded Ripley that despite the separation of the Center from the Department of Anthropology, there continued to be fundamental

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[402] Ibid.
[403] Sol Tax to Sidney Galler, March 21, 1969, Sol Tax Papers, box 194, folder 15, SCRC, UChicago; Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, April 7, 1969, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Center for the Study of Man (cont'd), NAA.
[404] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, April 7, 1969, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Center for the Study of Man (cont'd), NAA.
[405] For the first few months, only SI staff and a few American members had been able to attend Center meetings. Tax had scheduled a collective meeting in May 1969 to firm up the Center's programs and begin work on selecting a permanent director.

disagreement between those anthropologists who considered themselves object or museum-oriented and those interested in making more theoretical contributions to the field. Recognizing the possibility that the Center could aggravate these tensions by resurrecting the former division between the BAE and the Department prior to the 1964 merger, he echoed Tax's position that the Center act as an operational base for Smithsonian endeavors dedicated to the pursuit of human ecology "in its broadest sense."[406] By organizing around this theme, he argued the Center could have a clean slate free of programs that did not directly contribute to understanding the relationship of humans to their total environment. "Eventually," he added, "it is possible that the common objectives of the Center for the Study of Man and the Office of Ecology would be recognized by both groups."[407]

Thus when the full membership of the Center for the Study of Man met in May 1969 to settle on its structure, there was already some sense of what shape it would take. With Tax's advice, the Center members agreed it would act as "an international body to develop and coordinate a worldwide development of the human sciences as they impinge upon species-wide social problems of mankind" and that it should remain under the aegis of the Smithsonian Institution.[408] They confirmed that the Center's programs should maintain their global, interdisciplinary focus and that research efforts should be tied to other world anthropology initiatives organized by the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences and *Current Anthropology*.[409] In addition to

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[406] Sidney Galler to Dillon Ripley, "The Future of the Center for the Study of Man," April 4, 1969, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man (folder 1), SIA.
[407] Ibid.
[408] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Meeting of the Center for the Study of Man, May 15, 1969, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man (folder 1), SIA.
[409] This would be relatively easy to accomplish, since Tax was President of IUAES in addition to his roles as the editor of CA and the acting director of the CSM.

supporting the urgent anthropology program and developing an anthropological bibliography and database, the members agreed to meet again in another year's time to devise task forces exploring the past, present, and future relevance of anthropology. Finally, they endorsed the establishment of a separate facility to house the Center's programs so as to better distinguish its activities from the rest of Smithsonian anthropology. The originally proposed Museum of Man, they argued, would "permit the sciences of man to be removed from the context of a natural history museum" making it possible to address the study of human beings within a much broader conceptual framework.[410]

The question of just how broad a framework, however, remained up for debate. Following their discussion, the Center members appointed archaeologist and School for Advanced Research President Emeritus Douglas Schwartz as chairman and left him to determine the agenda for the next year's meeting. To facilitate his task, in October 1969 he circulated a proposal centered on the question of anthropology's relevance to universal problems. In it, he questioned whether the diverse disciplinary interests of the Center's members necessitated a move away from the development of world anthropology and instead demanded a greater concentration on how to incorporate anthropological perspectives within larger social projects. By raising this question, Schwartz ultimately asked whether anthropology alone should be responsible for coming up with solutions to universal human problems or if it should serve an advisory capacity in an otherwise multi-disciplinary approach.[411]

[410] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Meeting of the Center for the Study of Man, May 15, 1969, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man (folder 1), SIA.
[411] Ibid.

Though most of the members supported the general scope of Schwartz's proposal, a few worried that too much emphasis on multidisciplinary approaches would operate against the centrality of strengthening and redefining anthropology as part of the Center's programming. "I entirely agree that anthropology has a contribution to the modern world, and that we in the Center should see it as our main function to help articulate this," responded Fredrik Barth. "But," he continued, "I feel our group has to do this through its concern for our basic discipline: in our contribution to Anthropology we stand as equals, but in our direct relevance to any particular social problem we differ greatly... I feel that it is only by careful exploration of the common tradition we share, and by rethinking how and where this common anthropological tradition is relevant, that we can start being effective as a group."[412] Dell Hymes added to Barth's sentiments, noting how through the shared practice of ethnography, anthropologists might be better able to mediate between the scientist and an affected community than those approaching social problems from other disciplines. "I would hope," he told Schwartz, "that we could all agree—and mean it, where some would give it lip-service only—that solutions to problems must proceed with the consent and knowledge of the solved."[413] With this statement, Hymes echoed the ideas of reflexivity and reciprocity that had come to typify conversations about anthropology's responsibility to its subjects of study by the end of the decade. Once again, it seemed unclear how the Smithsonian should proceed in addressing problems of urgent concern and if there would ever be consensus on which topics held the greatest urgency for anthropology and, for that matter, humankind.

[412] Fredrik Barth to Samuel Stanley, "Memo from Doug Schwartz," October 24, 1969, Sol Tax Papers, box 193, folder 9, SCRC, UChicago.
[413] Dell Hymes to Douglas Schwartz, November 2, 1969, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Center for the Study of Man (cont'd), NAA.

Conclusion

In the midst of the disciplinary and institutional ferment surrounding its creation, it is hardly surprising that the Smithsonian's urgent anthropology program failed to find a strong foothold. Conceived in the spirit of turn-of-the-century salvage ethnography, by the late-1960s the program's initial focus on documenting disappearing cultures had been replaced with a much larger preoccupation with using anthropological knowledge to find solutions to problems affecting all of humankind. As this chapter has shown, the reasons for this were twofold. First, the individual interests of Ripley and Tax in establishing a program for urgent research became enmeshed within the deep-seated factionalism of Smithsonian anthropology. Though Tax's vision for world anthropology was supported in part by Ripley's own investment in bridging anthropology with ecology, both failed to account for how these agendas would aggravate pre-existing debates about whether or not the Institution's anthropologists should devote their attention primarily to museum work or to more theoretical concerns. These persistent discussions challenged Tax's ability to maintain financial support for urgent anthropology, forcing him and Ripley to reframe their objectives within a broader context. The creation of the Center for the Study of Man in 1968 did little to ease these tensions, as even more ambitious plans to organize urgent tasks in human ecology and to construct a brand new Museum of Man would force some to question whether anthropology—or something else—belonged in a museum at all.

Secondly, and perhaps most critically, Tax's determination to support urgent anthropological research on a global scale raised important questions about the changing function of anthropology and especially the discipline's relationship to developing parts of the world. As those interested in developing a program in urgent anthropology

continued to meet to discuss its scope, it became clear that anthropology's former model of studying so-called isolated cultures no longer met contemporary demands. Emerging nations such as India saw anthropology as a way to make sense of the changes happening within their country's rapidly industrializing landscape and argued for the urgency of incorporating these perspectives within government policy. From within the United States, growing anxieties about anthropology's complicity in neo-colonialist endeavors coupled with the revolutionary spirit of the late-1960s caused many in the field to demand a reinvention of anthropology's traditional empiricist methods and a turn towards more reflexive, critical modes of inquiry. As urgent anthropology struggled to determine its unit of analysis, the unit in anthropology subsequently also began to change, growing from a single, dying culture to a rapidly developing society to an entire world population in search of answers. Despite this huge increase in scale, Tax and Ripley remained committed to what they viewed, for better or worse, as an increasingly urgent task. Whether or not the Smithsonian was the place to undertake it, however, still needed to be determined.

CHAPTER FIVE

Preserving Humankind:

Anthropology, Human Ecology, and the Evolution of the National Museum of Man, 1968-1984

> One of the maxims for the Smithsonian, which concerns itself with general research problems that have to do with museums, should be the importance of the study of two basic confrontations, the impact of man on his environment and the impact of the environment on man, and the influence that man has upon objects. Somewhere within these realms there are clues to our understanding of ourselves and, I suspect, our survival.
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> —S. Dillon Ripley, *The Sacred Grove*, 1969.[414]

Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, one of the major incentives for establishing the Center for the Study of Man was the promise of a new Museum of Man where plans for the Smithsonian's expanding interests in ecology and anthropology could be brought together through cross-disciplinary programs and exhibits. While the proposition of a separate facility on the National Mall integrating the human and biological sciences offered exciting possibilities for future research and displays, it inevitably raised practical and philosophical considerations about what such a museum would look like. In particular, questions about location, function, and administrative organization fueled discussions about the Museum's construction, especially as available building sites on the National Mall dwindled. More critically, conversations about space cut to the intellectual core of the Museum and its intended purpose, leading to renewed assessments of where

[414] S. Dillon Ripley, *The Sacred Grove: Essays on Museums* (Washington, D.C.: Simon and Schuster, 1969), 13.

anthropology, as the discipline devoted to the study of human beings, belonged within the larger structure of the Smithsonian. For others, the Museum of Man and its ties to Ripley's developing ideas about museum-based human ecology offered alternative strategies for projects beyond the scope of anthropology. In the end, the persistent lack of focus for the Museum prevented its physical construction and led to the redistribution of its affiliated programs within the existing structure of the Institution.

Although the Museum of Man was never built, debates surrounding its proposed development provide a useful vehicle for analyzing the role of museums as sites for the production and display of scientific knowledge during the Cold War. Most literature on the history of natural history museums considers how these institutions shifted their focus from the careful collection and curation of taxonomic specimens to the development of effective and engaging exhibits, particularly after World War II.[415] These works emphasize the role of museums primarily as a site for public education while downplaying their contributions to the organization of new research programs and scientific fields in the second half of the twentieth century. Retracing the history of the Museum of Man concept instead shows that the disciplinary flexibility and resources located at the Smithsonian proved integral to Ripley's efforts to develop a museum-based approach to the study and display of human ecology.[416] Moreover, he and Tax both

[415] For a recent example, see Karen A. Rader and Victoria E.M. Cain, *Life on Display: Revolutionizing U.S. Museums of Science and Natural History in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014). See also Robert E. Kohler, *All Creatures: Naturalists, Collectors, and Biodiversity, 1850-1950* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2006).

[416] Because of its grounding in a variety of disciplinary traditions and institutions, it is impossible to provide a general overview of human ecology during this period, nor is there literature in the history of science treating this topic in a synthetic manner. The closest is perhaps Gene Cittadino, who categorizes the development from the 1920s through the 1950s as a series of conceptual frameworks rather than a distinct discipline. See Eugene Cittadino, "The Failed Promise of Human Ecology," in *Science and Nature: Essays in the History of the Environmental Sciences*, ed. Michael Shortland (Oxford: British Society for the History of Science, 1993), 251-283. For another take on the early development of human ecology during

conceived of the educational and research benefits of the Museum as mutually reinforcing; according to their philosophies of open education and action anthropology, one could not exist without the other. In addition to Tax's and Ripley's plans for the Museum, members of the Department of Anthropology saw it as an appropriate forum to experiment with the new research directions emerging throughout the discipline, beginning in the late-1960s. In much the same way museum collections had aided the consolidation of American anthropology as a coherent discipline at the turn of the twentieth century, many of the Smithsonian's anthropologists considered the Museum of Man an ideal location for establishing new modes to relay and display the changing interests of the field during its period of crisis. Thus while public education served as a central justification for its construction, the Museum of Man concept also gained support as a space for the integration of changing social and scientific ideas. Along these lines, the Museum's ties to the Center for the Study of Man, and, in turn, the Smithsonian's urgent anthropology program, meant that it would likewise provide a repository where examples of biological and cultural diversity could be exhibited and preserved for future use.

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first connects plans to build a Museum of Man, as a central activity of the Center for the Study of Man, to the prior expansion of the Smithsonian's facilities during the 1950s. Specifically, it concentrates on the uncertain place of anthropology within the National Museum of Natural History

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the 1920s and '30s and its ties to sociology at the University of Chicago, see Gregg Mitman, *The States of Nature: Ecology, Community, and American Social Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). Within anthropology, the best accounts of how ecological concepts became integrated within the field are Emilio Moran, ed., *The Ecosystem Approach in Anthropology: From Concept to Practice* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), and Kay Milton, "Ecologies: Anthropology, Culture and the Environment," *International Social Science Journal* 154 (Dec. 1997): 477-495.

and comments on changing perceptions of what it meant to curate anthropological exhibits. The second section builds on this discussion by returning to Tax's efforts to expand the Smithsonian's anthropological activities as part of a larger project to develop the global human sciences. Though it highlights the Museum's proposed function in facilitating the educational component of Tax's philosophy of "action anthropology," it also shows how his emphasis on research-oriented questions began to diverge from the more museum-based approach of Ripley's vision for human ecology. Section three explains how both Tax and the Smithsonian's administrators used the Museum of Man as an organizational framework to respond to ongoing factionalism within the Department of Anthropology by removing the more applied activities of the Center for the Study of Man from the Museum of Natural History. The fourth section presents a shift away from anthropology as a component within the Museum of Man entirely, and instead analyzes the museum's organization as a Museum for the "Family of Man" in keeping with the cultural pluralist vision of the 1976 Bicentennial. It also considers how this concept became a useful tool for Ripley's evolving ideas about the display of environmental concerns and the centrality of museums for ensuring human survival. In the fifth section, I return to the relationship between anthropology and natural history, showing how the Smithsonian's anthropologists made one last attempt to separate themselves from the biological sciences by proposing a Museum of Cultures.

Finally, the chapter concludes by assessing how the different visions for the Museum of Man became integrated in the construction of the South Quadrangle in the mid-1980s, which included the display of art and cultural from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. It shows that through the Quadrangle's focus on the themes of conservation and

survival, the underlying intention of the Museum of Man as a site for integrating perspectives from the human and ecological found a new form. Reviewing these different phases in the history of the Smithsonian's Museum of Man reveals the possibility and limitations of constructing a cross-disciplinary museum, especially for supporting the development of new modes of social and scientific inquiry.

Phase I. Early Plans for a National Museum of Man

The idea to create a Museum of Man on the Mall was not unique to Ripley's administrative vision. Between the First and Second World Wars, Smithsonian administrators had begun to draft plans for the construction of several new facilities to accommodate the large quantities of artifacts and other materials that had accumulated since the Institution's establishment. These proposals included plans to expand the National Museum of Natural History through the construction of new wings as well as plans to establish additional buildings on the Mall devoted to topics such as history, engineering, and art.[417] These efforts remained largely dormant until after World War II, at which point conversations turned to the creation of a National Air Museum (renamed as the National Air and Space Museum in the 1960s) and a somewhat reoriented Museum of Science, Engineering, and Industry.[418] By the early 1950s, however, continued needs for more space in Natural History prompted Frank Taylor, head curator of the Department of Engineering and Industry, to devise a scheme that would bring together the previously proposed topics of history, engineering and industry, as well as anthropology, into a multi-leveled museum structure organized around the theme of

[417] William S. Walker, *A Living Exhibition: The Smithsonian and the Transformation of the Universal Museum* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 47.
[418] Walker, *A Living Exhibition*, 48.

American heritage.[419] Among the titles considered for the new facility was a "Museum of Man," since its exhibits would convey a total narrative of the history and technological achievements of human beings. In the end, the Smithsonian's administrators chose to leave anthropology outside plans for the new facility and in 1959 they opened a Museum of History and Technology dedicated to the original pairing of history and industry.[420]

As historian William Walker has discussed, one of the main reasons for this decision was the reluctance among the Institution's anthropologists to move out of the National Museum of Natural History. At the time, the Department of Anthropology perceived their place within Natural History as beneficial for providing their exhibits with a greater sense of scientific authority—an advantage they believed might be lost with their inclusion in a museum for history.[421] Yet by the 1960s, anthropology's evolving approach to its subjects of study inspired plans to overhaul the Smithsonian's existing anthropological displays and led to renewed conversations about the need for additional space and exhibits.[422] Thus when Tax polled the Institution's anthropologists in 1965 to gather information on how to organize the newly-formed Smithsonian Office of Anthropological Research, staff members such as senior ethnologist John Ewers

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[419] "Museum of Man, Report of Meeting," January 29, 1953, Gordon Gibson Papers, box 130, folder: History of Origin of MHT, National Anthropological Archives (NAA), Smithsonian Institution, Suitland, MD.

[420] "History of the Museum of Man idea in the Smithsonian," May 7, 1980, Gibson Papers, box 129, folder: Extracts of Papers and Memos – Museum of Man, NAA. This name remained until 1980, at which point the Museum of History and Technology was renamed and reconceived as the National Museum of American History. For an extended discussion of the development of the Museum of History and Technology, see William S. Walker, "History and Technology: A New Museum, a New Era," in *A Living Exhibition: The Smithsonian and the Transformation of the Universal Museum* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 44-85.

[421] Walker, *A Living Exhibition*, 49.

[422] Mary Jo Arnoldi, "From the Diorama to the Dialogic: A Century of Exhibiting Africa at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History," *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 39 (1999): 711-712; William W. Fitzhugh, "Ambassadors in Sealskins: Exhibiting Eskimos at the Smithsonian," in *Exhibiting Dilemmas: Issues of Representation at the Smithsonian*, ed. Amy Henderson and Adrienne L. Kaeppler (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 206-245.

suggested using the merger as an opportunity to integrate the activities of the Institution's archaeologists and anthropologists in a reconceived Museum of Man. A new facility, he argued, would provide laboratory spaces, study areas, exhibit halls, and collection storage separate from those available in Natural History and would ultimately help to bridge staff interests.[423] This idea remained on the backburner until 1968, when it became incorporated as part of the expanding priorities of the urgent anthropology program as embodied by the activities of the Center for the Study of Man. The Museum's intended function in the 1960s was therefore directly tied to Tax's and Ripley's plan to unify and expand Smithsonian anthropology. Similarly, the establishment of the Museum of Man as the definitive aim of the Center promised to elevate the scope and importance of the Institution's anthropological collections beyond the culture-area displays found in Natural History into dynamic exhibits conveying universal themes about the human experience.

The direct tie between the Center's activities and the proposed Museum, however, raised crucial questions about its future shape and administration. First and foremost, who would act as its director? While Tax had helped outline the Center's interdisciplinary focus on the human sciences, the 1968 Advisory Committee recommended that he should not serve as its head due to his inability to reside in Washington full-time.[424] They urged Ripley to consider anthropologists already working on long-range projects within the

[423] John Ewers to Sol Tax, "Re: Proposal for a New Museum of Man (Anthropology)," January 4, 1965, Sol Tax Papers, box 194, folder 9, Special Collections Research Center (SCRC), University of Chicago, Chicago, IL.

[424] Robert McCormick Adams, Ward H. Goodenough, Floyd G. Loundsbury, and Sherwood Washburn, "Report of the Advisory Committee on Anthropology," as included in Richard Cowan to Dillon Ripley, May 10, 1968, Assistant Secretary for Science, circa 1963-1973, Record Unit 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man, #2, Smithsonian Institution Archives (SIA), Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Part of Tax's contract at the Smithsonian specified that he would act as Ripley's advisor only if he could maintain his faculty position and teaching duties at the University of Chicago.

Nation's capital and offered the names of several individuals involved with the anthropology section of the National Science Foundation (specifically Albert Spaulding, Alan Smith, and Richard Lieban).[425] Mindful of introducing yet another personality (and salary) into the still-fragile structure of Smithsonian anthropology, Assistant Secretary of Science Sidney Galler instead recommended that Ripley designate Tax as the Center's temporary Acting Director while maintaining his role as special advisor on anthropology. This maneuver, Galler argued, would help clarify the distinct budgetary needs of the Center from the Department of Anthropology and allow sufficient time to select an appropriate head for the new museum.[426] In his view, keeping Tax as general advisor on anthropology would also maintain the future possibility of interdepartmental and interdisciplinary collaboration between scientists working in Natural History and the Museum of Man.

While Tax accepted this decision, he concurred with the Advisory Committee that his skills were best utilized in a consulting capacity and set out to find an individual better suited to the task of overseeing the Center's operations. Although he agreed that the names proposed by the committee were fine options, he put forward primatologist and physical anthropologist Sherwood Washburn as the ideal candidate for the position.[427] Reviewing Washburn's credentials, it is easy to see why. Like Ripley and Tax, by the 1960s Washburn had become firmly committed to integrating perspectives from the biological and social sciences into understandings of human evolution—an aim he

[425] Robert McCormick Adams, Ward H. Goodenough, Floyd G. Loundsbury, and Sherwood Washburn, "Report of the Advisory Committee on Anthropology," as included in Richard Cowan to Dillon Ripley, May 10, 1968, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man, #2, SIA.
[426] Sidney Galler to Dillon Ripley, "Establishment of the Center for the Study of Man," April 15, 1968, CSM Records, box 3, folder: Center for the Study of Man [folder 2], SIA.
[427] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "S. L. Washburn," July 22, 1968, Tax Papers, box 196, folder 3, SCLC, UChicago.

achieved through his work on population genetics and the drafting of a "new physical anthropology."[428] He also participated in the 1959 Darwin Centennial, where he made a strong case for the place of anthropology within the modern evolutionary synthesis spearheaded by Ripley's mentor, Ernst Mayr. Furthermore, he was a familiar face, having worked with Tax on the faculty at the University of Chicago as well as through the organization of several summer symposia on physical anthropology through the Wenner-Gren Foundation.[429]

Perhaps the greatest evidence of Washburn's appropriateness for the position was his submission of an appendix to the 1968 Advisory Committee Report outlining what a Museum of Man might look like. In their overview of the Smithsonian's anthropological activities, the Committee had criticized the present state of the exhibits in Natural History as out of place with the rest of the museum's displays and, worse still, an inadequate reflection of the current research interests of the Institution's anthropologists.[430] Questioning the appropriateness of including anthropological exhibits in Natural History altogether, Washburn instead proposed that a separate Museum of Man could provide a more systematic and integrative approach to educating visitors about humans as both biological and cultural beings.[431] He suggested creating displays that highlighted ideas

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[428] For more details on Washburn's work and its larger efforts to incorporate anthropology within the modern evolutionary synthesis, see Vassiliki Betty Smocovitis, "Humanizing Evolution: Anthropology, the Evolutionary Synthesis, and the Prehistory of Biological Anthropology, 1927-1962," *Current Anthropology* 53, no. S5 (April 2012): S108-S125, and, Donna J. Haraway, "Remodelling the Human Way of Life: Sherwood Washburn and the New Physical Anthropology, 1950-1980," in *Bones, Bodies, Behavior*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 206-259.
[429] The Viking Fund, *The First Ten Years, 1941-1951: Including a Report on the Fund's Activities for the Year Ended January 31, 1951* (New York: The Viking Fund, Inc., 1951).
[430] Robert McCormick Adams, Ward H. Goodenough, Floyd G. Loundsbury, and Sherwood Washburn, "Report of the Advisory Committee on Anthropology," as included in Richard Cowan to Dillon Ripley, May 10, 1968, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man, #2, SIA.
[431] Sherwood Washburn, "Appendix 1," included with Robert McCormick Adams, Ward H. Goodenough, Floyd G. Loundsbury, and Sherwood Washburn, "Report of the Advisory Committee on Anthropology," as

about the unity of humankind using topics such as art, technical innovation, social systems, and ecology. This last example, he argued, was the easiest to illustrate, since exhibit maps could be designed to show how cultural aspects like language or religious views became influenced by environmental factors such as changes in geographic terrain or population density. Additionally, he reasoned that an ecological approach to exhibits could be used to synthesize narratives about human development with present-day scientific and social concerns:

> Problems of the future could be graphically exhibited in terms of numbers of people, environmental problems, progress of technology. The past could be shown, perhaps in one set of exhibits stressing the length of human history and in others the changing centers of civilization and power. But, however planned, the exhibits in the Museum of Man should yield a vivid sense of the history of man, the diversity of cultures, and of the science which puts this diversity in the perspective of knowledge. This would not only be far more useful educationally than the present style of exhibits, but it would bring the exhibits into relation with the most recent developments in science. After going through the exhibits a person should have a better understanding of his fellow man, of war, of religion, of the social system. Man is a visual creature, and the museum which first utilizes its potential power to help man understand himself will revolutionize the role of all museums. May the Smithsonian be the place where the revolution takes place.[432]

Washburn's notions about the educational possibilities of a Museum of Man, and especially his ideas that ecology could provide a framework for engaging with contemporary social and scientific ideas, reflected the development of Ripley's own thinking during this period—a topic I will return to later in this chapter. In order to properly "sell the idea of a museum of man," however, he advised Ripley that the Smithsonian would need to turn away from traditional museum techniques and experiment with a new style of exhibits that could easily communicate complex scientific

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included in Richard Cowan to Dillon Ripley, May 10, 1968, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man, #2, SIA.

[432] Ibid.

ideas and engage visitors on specific problems.[433] In his view, anthropology's association with the word "museum" had been marred by images of dusty rooms filled with static objects and taxidermied specimens left untouched since the late-nineteenth century. While anthropology would necessarily be an important component of the new museum, it would require substantial reformatting in order to fulfill its modern-day function.

Washburn's comments about the outdated quality of the Smithsonian's anthropological exhibits must be situated within the broader context of museum anthropology after World War II. As historian of anthropology George Stocking has discussed, the outbreak of war left a considerable percentage of the world's anthropological collections without care and in disarray, making it difficult for researchers to access or even locate specimens. This was in turn exacerbated by a general lack of interest among anthropologists (physical anthropologists and archaeologists excluded) in the study of objects, many of whom instead came to favor more theoretically-oriented questions in the field.[434] Expanding on Stocking's observations, museum historian Steven Conn has commented on how the "epistemological authority" once given to anthropological collections in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries became further undermined by the changing relationship between anthropologists and their former subjects of study in the postcolonial era, as well as by the widespread rejection of the notions of "otherness" that typified the discipline at its establishment.[435]

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[433] Sherwood Washburn to Dillon Ripley, "Museum of Man," May 12, 1969, Center for the Study of Man (CSM) Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Minutes of CSM Meetings, NAA.
[434] George W. Stocking, Jr., "Essays on Museums and Material Culture," in *Objects and Others*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 8-9.
[435] Steven Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 33.

Thus, Washburn's recommendation came as little surprise to the Institution's anthropologists, who themselves had been calling for the renovation of their displays since before Ripley's arrival. Yet as I have noted elsewhere in this dissertation, the 1964 merger contributed an additional obstacle by challenging notions of curatorial responsibility and the extent to which the Institution's scholars should engage with the management of exhibits over the pursuit of their own research. These internal conflicts mirrored conversations taking place among Museum of Natural History staff more generally, as increasing pressure from the academy to "publish or perish" caused the Institution's scientists to question how the administration evaluated their performances and determined which projects received funding.[436] This anxiety inevitably contributed to the factionalism initiated by the 1964 merger, since despite being united administratively under a single Smithsonian Office of Anthropology, the former Bureau curators continued to pursue largely research-based tasks of assembling ethnographic data, leaving the former members of the Department of Anthropology with the dual responsibilities of managing exhibits while conducting their own research.

In many ways, then, the problem of balancing traditional curatorial duties alongside the pursuit of modern anthropological research lay at the core of both the Smithsonian's difficulty in developing new exhibits and in the declining state of museum anthropology overall. Nowhere is this more clearly articulated than in former BAE Curator William Sturtevant's piece, "Does Anthropology Need Museums?" Although frequently cited as an important marker of the end of anthropology's museum era,

[436] This is turn prompted the 1963 formation of the Smithsonian's "Senate of Scientists," a separate council created to assess the needs of NMNH faculty and improve communication between Smithsonian scientists and the administration. Curator of African Ethnology Gordon Gibson, who came on staff in 1958, served as the Senate's first Chair.

Sturtevant's piece is equally reflective of his specific experiences and frustrations with working at the Smithsonian.[437] Two points in particular stand out: First, he generalized that many anthropology collections in the United States suffered by hiring non-specialists to process specimens in order to allow senior curators time to pursue individual research projects. He called this division of labor a "risky maneuver" since research budgets were often determined by the costs of maintaining collections at the expense of more problem-oriented projects—a fact demonstrated by the budgetary disparities of the Smithsonian Office of Anthropology and efforts to organize a program in urgent anthropology. "On the other hand," he wrote, "giving the research staff full curatorial duties has untoward consequences for both the collections and the research already outlined," a position that certainly resonated with his views as a former member of the BAE.[438]

Secondly, he reflected on the inappropriateness of housing anthropological displays in museums of natural history and specifically cited the Smithsonian's plans to build a new Museum of Man as a possible solution. He noted that one of the primary advantages of a separate Museum of Man (other than preventing the misrepresentation of indigenous cultures as displayed alongside taxidermied animals) would be the museum's expanded function as a working archive. This, he argued, would extend the scope of curated objects to include "still and cinema photographs, drawings and paintings, sound recordings, anthropological manuscripts and books," as well as the "usual museum collections of artifacts and skeletal materials."[439] Such a structure would demand a new

[437] For example, see Ira Jacknis, *The Storage Box of Tradition: Kwakiutl Art, Anthropologists, and Museums, 1881-1981* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002), as well as chapters in Stocking, 1985, and Conn, 2010.
[438] William C. Sturtevant, "Does Anthropology Need Museums?" *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington* 82 (1969): 641.
[439] Sturtevant, "Does Anthropology Need Museums?" 643.

class of curator focused on the task of archiving, an occupation more characteristic of the former Bureau staff. A different vision of the curator's role would, he hoped, resolve the "universal conflict between research vs. housekeeping."[440] Nonetheless, he emphasized that "Museums of Man" should serve firstly as research organizations committed to doing "good anthropology whether or not this is directly related to the collections."[441] In other words, a new Museum of Man would specialize in pursuing current anthropological problems as its primary goal and use the outcomes of this work to construct its exhibits, and not the other way around. He therefore concluded that anthropology could still benefit from museums, but that institutions like the Smithsonian ought to do more to respond to the demands of its staff as well as the larger scientific community.

Hardly a message of decline, Sturtevant's piece instead suggested the potential of museums as important sites for aiding anthropology's reinvention in the late-1960s. With the Vietnam War looming in the background, many anthropologists became cognizant of the need to increase the discipline's visibility in the public sphere and to work towards aiding the understanding of societies undergoing change abroad, as well as the reactions and shifts within their own cultures.[442] Aware of the powerful reach of the media and mass communication, some scholars, including members of the Committee of Anthropological Research in Museums, argued that in fact museums were more useful for anthropology than ever before and could aid in instructing visitors on basic knowledge in the biological and social sciences.

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[440] William Sturtevant to Clifford Evans, "Suggestion for Senate of Scientists," October 14, 1968, National Museum of Natural History (U.S.), Senate of Scientists Records, 1963-1987, Record Unit 429, box 4, folder: Replies to Questionnaire – Senate, 1968, SIA.
[441] Sturtevant, "Does Anthropology Need Museums?" 646.
[442] See, for example, the arguments summarized in Marcus S. Goldstein, "Anthropological Research, Action, and Education in Modern Nations: With Special Reference to the U.S.A," *Current Anthropology* 9 (October 1968): 247-269.

According to Committee member and Milwaukee Museum Director Stephen de Borhegyi, the construction of "motivational" or problem-oriented exhibits could help the public (especially in the United States) "overcome their deep seated prejudices and their often irrational and negative attitudes toward past and present alien cultures."[443] Within such exhibits, visitors could be guided through the basic methods of anthropological observation and allowed to come to their own conclusions about current events. "Anthropology today," he wrote, "provides a scientific basis for dealing with the crucial problems of the world today: how the peoples of different appearance and culture can get along peaceably together. Anthropology exhibits in natural history museums, therefore, should indeed become the magic mirrors in which the diversities of human behavior and their causes can be reflected."[444] Yet in order to achieve this, he echoed the assertions made by Washburn and Sturtevant that natural history museums needed to move away from their prior tradition of displaying non-Western peoples as "savage" or primitive and instead provide visitors with displays that showed the history and ethnology of the world's cultures through the lens of modern anthropological practice. Doing so would help make anthropology relatable to a broader audience and would make museums essential resources for public outreach.

Reviewing this example, it appears that in the late-1960s the issue at hand had less to do with whether anthropology needed museums and more to do with how museums could best utilize anthropology. Ripley and Tax had of course articulated the

[443] Stephen F. De Borhegyi, "A New Role for Anthropology in Natural History Museums, Paper to be Delivered at the Science Museums Symposium, *American Association of Museums* Meeting, New Orleans, May 1969," RU 108, box 9, folder: Anthropology Dept. of, 1966-1969, SIA. This paper is a slight expansion of de Borhegyi's comments in response to Goldstein's article, which were also included in the October 1968 issue of *Current Anthropology*.
[444] Stephen F. De Borhegyi, "A New Role for Anthropology in Natural History Museums," Paper to be Delivered at the Science Museums Symposium, *American Association of Museums* Meeting, New Orleans, May 1969," RU 108, box 9, folder: Anthropology Dept. of, 1966-1969, SIA.

critical significance of anthropology within the Smithsonian during the earliest days of their partnership and used it as a central justification first for organizing an international research program in urgent anthropology and, later, for establishing the Center for the Study of Man. Their intention to integrate these activities within a Museum of Man emphasizing anthropology's role in educating the general public thus marked the culmination of their intellectual and administrative collaboration. In fact, by October 1968 Tax had already begun treating the activities of the Center as interchangeable with the Museum, reporting to Ripley that through the Center's expanding programs "we are moving in the direction of becoming the Museum of Man."[445]

At the time, however, the Center (and in turn, the Museum) still lacked clear leadership, as well as a distinct physical presence on the National Mall. Despite Tax's insistence that Ripley write to Sherwood Washburn in order to persuade him to become Director of the Center and the Museum, by the end of 1968 Washburn officially declined the offer.[446] This in turn left Tax in the position of Acting Director. Galler also advised Ripley that in order to achieve its aims, the Museum needed to somehow become visible.[447] As a temporary fix until a more permanent structure could be secured, Ripley ordered new plaques to be placed outside the National Museum of Natural History that included the Museum of Man as part of its title (Figure 5.1).[448]

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[445] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Center for the Study of Man," October 11, 1968, Tax Papers, box 196, folder 3, SCRC, UChicago. In addition to supporting the continuation of urgent anthropology and plans to prepare a revised Handbook of North American Indians, by this point the Center's proposed activities also included plans for a film archive (see chapter 4), a folklife institute, a bibliographic survey, and a history of anthropology and archives program. It also included a growing number of international members and consultants, many of whom Tax hoped to bring to the Smithsonian as visiting fellows.

[446] Dillon Ripley to Sherwood Washburn, October 29, 1968, Tax Papers, box 196, folder 3, SCRC, UChicago.

[447] Sidney Galler, margin comments on Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Center for the Study of Man," October 11, 1968, Tax Papers, box 196, folder 3, SCRC, UChicago.

[448] One such plaque can still be found outside the Museum's Constitution Avenue entrance. See figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1. Photograph of sign outside Constitution Avenue entrance of the National Museum of Natural History. (Photo credit: Adrianna Link, August 19, 2015)

Although this action gave the Museum of Man an official public presence, in reality it meant little change for the Institution's anthropological exhibits, which remained confined within the spatial limitations of Natural History and left the question of the appropriateness of the discipline's inclusion there unresolved. It also meant that the problem-oriented projects of the Center for the Study of Man (and the affiliated staff) would have to share space and resources with the Department of Anthropology, which had been one of the primary reasons for the re-division of the Office of Anthropological Research in the first place. Perhaps most critically, the failure to appoint a permanent director for the Center and Museum left its future course to the discretion of Ripley and Tax, a circumstance that would eventually result in two competing visions for the

Museum of Man—one geared towards exploring the research and educational potential of the human sciences and one grounded in an expanded approach to human ecology.

Phase II. A Museum of Human Sciences…or Human Ecology? (1968-1972)

Plans to establish a Museum of Man at the Smithsonian in the late-1960s coincided with significant phases in the synthesis and articulation of the individual intellectual agendas of both Ripley and Tax. For Tax, the formative years of the Museum of Man and the Center for the Study of Man overlapped with his time as President of the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES). Similarly, his leadership roles in these activities became integrated as part of his larger effort to apply his method of action anthropology to the international area. For Ripley, this period saw a renewed commitment to his philosophy of open education and its manifestation within a museum-based approach to human ecology. While these separate pursuits initially complemented the larger educational and scientific aims of the Museum of Man, administrative and conceptual obstacles soon challenged their joint-vision for the Museum as well as their collaborative relationship.

As before, one of the core issues remained the internal division of the Smithsonian's anthropologists into those who advocated the Institution's involvement in problem-oriented research and those who saw their role as curators as fundamentally tied to constructing exhibits. While the Center of the Study of Man had been created in July 1968 to solve this problem, the delay between its establishment and its first programming meeting in May 1969 resulted in a loss of momentum and continued squabbles for space and resources within Natural History. Additionally, without a permanent director in

residence at the Smithsonian, the Center became less invested in ameliorating the Institution's internal factionalism and instead developed into an additional sounding board for Tax's projects in world anthropology. Following discussions on the relationship between urgent anthropology and the international community held at the 1968 Tokyo Conference, Tax began to conceive of the Center as an "international research center" committed to developing the human sciences on an international scale. Early efforts to identify a schematic for anthropology's application to universal problems, however, did little to consolidate the Center's programming, as members reluctantly agreed that its activities represented "neither anthropology nor the human sciences" but rather the particular interests of its assembled members.[449]

Thus in an attempt to capitalize on the intellectual strengths of its members, Tax and CSM Program Director Sam Stanley designated the proposed Museum of Man as the topic for the next full meeting. Noting that this subject would prove "of value to the whole world population and not to any single nation," planning for the Museum provided a convenient mechanism to unify the disparate interests of Center members and to gauge its future programming.[450] To aid the discussion, Tax appointed a committee of in-house and local members to devise an initial report on "How Anthropology in the Context of a Great, New Museum of Man Can Educate the Public to the Complex Nature of Some of the Major Problems Facing the Survival of Our Species."[451] This committee, which consisted of Sherwood Washburn, anthropologist and primatologist Irven DeVore, Indian

[449] Samuel Stanley to Colleague, January 16, 1970, Gibson Papers, box 132, folder: Minutes, Announcements, Publicity [1 of 2], NAA.
[450] Ibid.
[451] Sol Tax to Irven Devore, Douglas Schwartz, M.N. Srinivas, Sherwood Washburn, William Sturtevant, "Committee for Planning Spring Agenda on the Museum of Man," January 19, 1970, RU 108, box 8, folder: Man, Center for the Study of [folder 1], SIA.

sociologist M. N. Srinivas, archaeologist Douglas Schwartz, Smithsonian Emeritus Curator of Physical Anthropology T. Dale Stewart, and former BAE Curator William Sturtevant, represented the major disciplinary interests of the Center and included nearly every person who had been considered for (and declined) the position of Director of the Center for the Study of Man/Museum of Man up to that point.[452] The resulting report from this group included a range of proposed visions of what a Museum of Man might look like and how it ought to reflect the aims of the Center for the Study of Man. Yet all involved agreed that the Museum "was not, and should not be, only a 'Museum of Anthropology,'" since only by extending beyond the "traditional disciplinary confines of the university" could the Center achieve a complete understanding of the problems facing humankind.[453] Additionally, they supported the interdisciplinary focus for the Center initially conceived by Ripley and Tax, noting that "some of the most interesting and important research problems fall between established disciplinary lines...anthropology must be linked with other disciplines, the natural and social sciences, and history. This relation of man with his environment should be considered on a global basis, and taking full note of cultural diversity."[454] A diagram drawn a year prior provided visual clarification to their ideas and suggested that though central to anthropology, the Museum of Man fit within a broader cosmological system representing the place of humans within their total environment (Figure 5.2).

[452] Alan Smith had also been nominated, but was chosen by members of the Department of Anthropology, not Tax. Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Selection of the Director of the CSM," February 5, 1969, RU 108, box 2, folder: Center for the Study of Man [folder1], SIA.
[453] Irven DeVore to Members of the Center for the Study of Man, "Planning Committee on the Museum of Man and Center for the Study of Man, Feb. 15-16, 1970," CSM Records, box 41, folder: Stanley Papers, May 1970, NAA.
[454] Ibid.

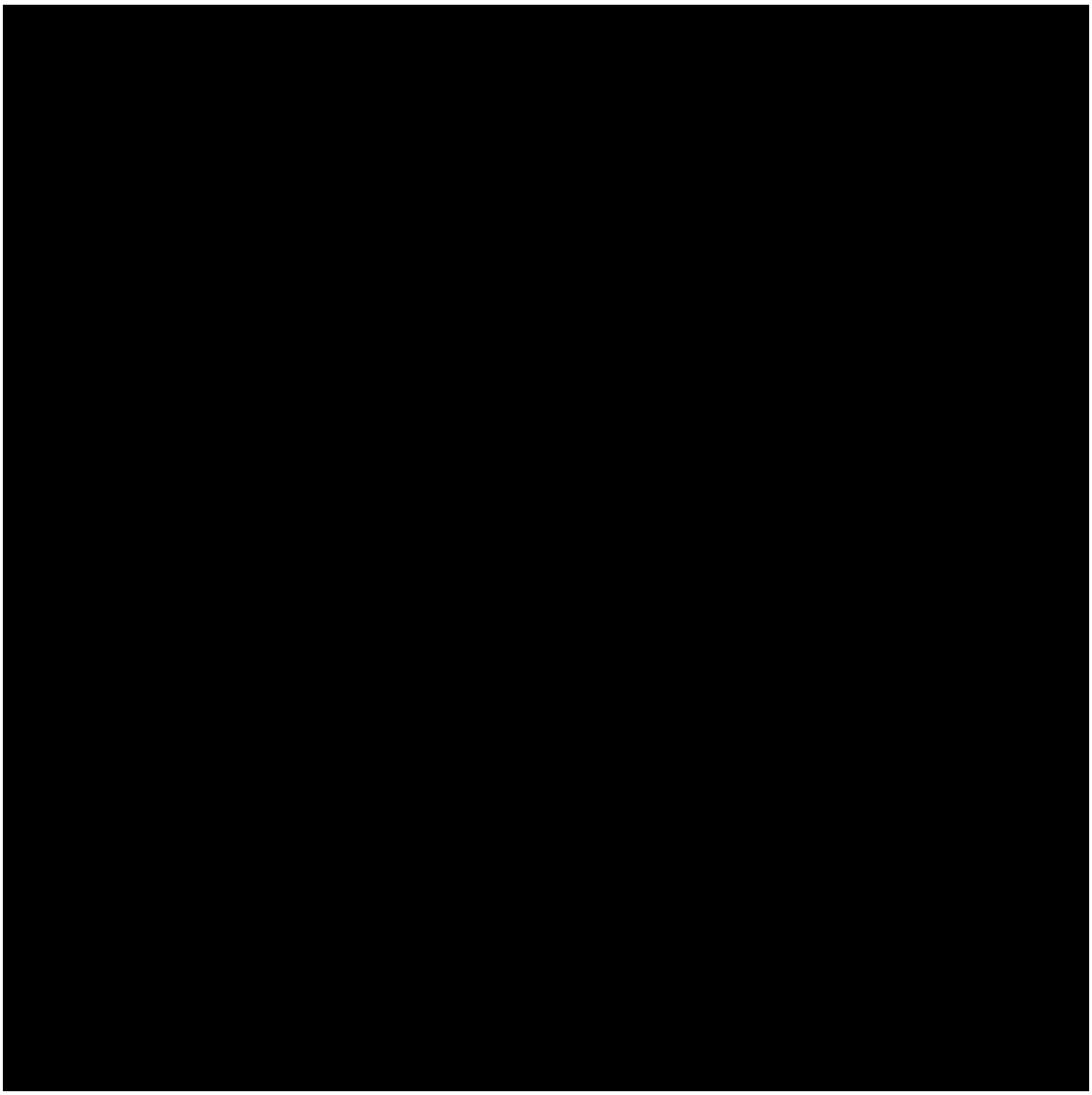

Figure 5.2. Organizational chart depicting the institutional and intellectual orientation of the Center for the Study of Man/Museum of Man. Recreated from T. Dale Stewart to Dillon Ripley, "Progress report on the National Museum of Man," Stewart to Ripley, 20 Oct. 1969," October 20, 1969, Gordon Gibson Papers, box 129, folder: Museum of Man, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Suitland, MD. (Image credit: Sean Schifano/Jeremy Link)

Recognizing the evolving objectives of anthropology and its expanding disciplinary affiliations, the committee suggested the Museum of Man should be conceptualized around the theme of "change," which would influence the composition of

its staff as well as its exhibit focus. To this end, they devised a bureaucratic structure for the Center for the Study of Man that, while maintaining a few core administrators, would employ thirty or so rotating "fellows" who would serve one to three year terms and would organize among themselves interdisciplinary task forces targeting specific problems.[455] These projects would then feed into the exhibit structure of the Museum of Man, which, in addition to assembling and caring for collections, would function primarily as a source of education. In addition to crafting exhibits, Tax envisioned a Museum that would disseminate knowledge through the production of books, films, and other such materials. His lengthy discussion of this aspect of the future Museum highlighted the relationship between "pure science" and policy as well as the responsibility of scientists for both obtaining knowledge and guiding its use:

> The object of knowledge <u>while being played with</u> is "pure science". But many people are equally concerned with problems of the world. The problems of the world require knowledge, but not necessarily in the form in which it was obtained in the course of the pursuits of pure science. To "educate" policy-makers, or the general public, knowledge generated by pure science has to be transmuted through discovery of the relation between such knowledge and the social problem to which it is relevant. This can best be done by people who are <u>scientists</u>, but who (for the purpose and for the moment) are <u>turned educators</u>. By what they learn, in the course of discovering how particular scientific knowledge is relevant, the scientist in turn suggests other problems of pure science.[456]

In stressing the primacy of education as a tool for social change, Tax echoed the philosophical basis for his theory of action anthropology (namely the idea that in order to solve or address a problem, anthropologists must work together with the community

[455] Some of the suggested general topics included: human ethology, cultural assimilation, human ecology, the study of trans-cultural human cognition, and other projects with a clear historical or descriptive synthetic focus.
[456] Irven DeVore to Members of the Center for the Study of Man, "Planning Committee on the Museum of Man and Center for the Study of Man, Feb. 15-16, 1970," CSM Records, box 141, folder: Stanley Papers, May 1970, NAA.

under study and mutually inform one another in the process), applying it to the proposed activities of the Museum of Man.

He cautioned, however, that social policy could only be as effective as its demonstrated results, which in turn had to be assessed by the educator (the anthropologists) and those being educated (the general public, which included the anthropologists). Elucidating his thoughts on how the Museum might contribute to the intersection of policy and education, he continued:

> The 'technical' knowledge used by policy-makers in discussion of social policy is not sufficient; but the additionally needed social-cultural knowledge cannot be used as abstract propositions; it must be reinterpreted and used within the particular social situation where it is useful. Implementation of policy requires abstract scientific knowledge, but it also therefore requires the involvement of the best human scientists. This requires that 'education' be broadly conceived as not only verbal but also as demonstration and as social action participation. At least some high quality anthropologists must be educators at least part of the time. The Museum of Man, therefore, is a center not only for interdisciplinary scientific work, by limited-time interdisciplinary task forces but also, as a center for education at all levels and in a variety of contexts, it needs always openly to demonstrate how knowledge is put to work.[457]

In less complicated terms, Tax stressed the main importance of a Museum of Man as a source of education for the general public as well as scientists, and envisioned a feedback structure in which the scientific research generating exhibits would in turn educate and inspire new research questions responding to the interests of learned and laypersons alike. While Srinivas agreed with this assessment, he added that this function might prove more significant than even Tax realized. Referencing the obstacles created by Cold War politics for both scientific research and international diplomacy, he noted that a broadly conceived Museum of Man could prove instrumental in resolving "problems in

[457] Irven DeVore to Members of the Center for the Study of Man, "Planning Committee on the Museum of Man and Center for the Study of Man, Feb. 15-16, 1970," CSM Records, box 141, folder: Stanley Papers, May 1970, NAA.

international communication and cooperation" by appealing to universal concerns.[458] As the concluding statement of the committee report, Srinivas's words highlighted the stakes of mounting the Museum of Man and the extent of its potential for advancing both scientific research and public knowledge on a worldwide scale.

Although not involved with Tax's committee, Ripley had begun to form similar ideas about the museum's use for international exchange and public education, which he articulated in a series of publications released during the late 1960s and early 1970s.[459] Like Tax, it appears that the administrative and intellectual questions surrounding the development of the Museum of Man in this period inspired him to revisit his philosophy of open education and its various applications. In an article for the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, he echoed Srinivas's observations about the role of museums in navigating Cold War politics and criticized the U.S. government for relying too much on the exchange of economic and political resources in their approach to foreign policy at the expense of sharing new ideas. He instead stressed how museums could facilitate the exchange of ideas abroad and advocated their potential as the "freest and least authoritarian form of communication."[460] In his view, museums could provide a more effective means of cross-cultural communication about foreign affairs while simultaneously providing a much-needed educational service to developing parts of the world. At the same time, he recognized the paradox created through the improvement of

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[458] Ibid.

[459] These included S. Dillon Ripley, "An Elegant Lady," *Vital Speeches of the Day* 34 (1968): 184-187, S. Dillon Ripley, "International Communication in the Twentieth Century," *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (1968): 53-55, S. Dillon Ripley, "Museums and Education," *Curator* 11 (1968): 183-189, S. Dillon Ripley, "Museums in North America," *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale* 14 (1972): 176-186, and, most notably, the publication of his monograph on museums, *The Sacred Grove: Essays on Museums* (Washington, D.C.: Simon & Schuster, 1969).

[460] Dillon Ripley, "International Communication in the Twentieth Century," *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (1968): 54.

global communications and the unintended consequence of "obliterating whole cultures or submerging them indistinguishably into twentieth-century man."[461] To this end, he cited the importance of the Smithsonian's urgent anthropology program for documenting the "lessons to be learned from disappearing cultures and people" and for fostering lasting ties with the international community via the collection of anthropological knowledge.[462] While he does not state it explicitly, his comments about the correlation between international communication and the active preservation of disappearing cultural forms represented his view that museums ought to support the increase and diffusion of knowledge through research as well as curatorial tasks. In other words, his notion of the Smithsonian as an international center grounded in open education relied equally on the support of programs like urgent anthropology as it did on the curation and presentation of data assembled in archives and exhibits.

The seamless interplay between research and preservation, between education and communication, thus stood at the core of Ripley's philosophy on museums, and, in turn, his vision for the Museum of Man. Beyond their diplomatic function, he also perceived these qualities as equally essential for ensuring the survival of humankind. In a chapter entitled "Museums and the Future" appearing in *The Sacred Grove*, he compared the museum to a "university without degrees" organized around the display of objects. These objects, he wrote, represented "visible symbol[s] of an intellectual process" that needed to be brought into conversation with other objects as well as the general public.[463] As with Tax's observations about the use of science for social policy, Ripley acknowledged

[461] Ripley, "International Communication in the Twentieth Century," 55.
[462] Ibid.
[463] Ripley, *The Sacred Grove*, 99.

the shared challenges of museum education for "social scientists and educators alike," commenting:

> At the root of most of our trouble as human beings is the lack of any sort of interest at all except for self-preservation. Of what use are any of the proposed panaceas for the preservation of evolved civilizations or the maintenance of cultures, if the majority of living people simply don't care? If the education industry does not create people who are interested in the world about them during their one single life, then education is, above all, a failure. I would contend that museums are the greatest available laboratory for studying the problem of how to create interest, and that this problem is central to our quest for survival as people.[464]

This observation is suggestive for several reasons. First, it reveals Ripley's frustrations with America's education system and his desire to create an informed citizenry through museums. Second, it demonstrates his continued sympathies for the pursuits of anthropologists and other social scientists in actively studying and engaging with human populations. Finally, and most importantly, it highlights his views about the interconnectedness of human activity with the fate of the planet and his hope that by educating the public about the realities of environmental and cultural destruction, he might successfully enact change by appealing to a universal instinct of self-preservation.

While humans had factored into Ripley's thinking about conservation and environmental protection for many years, by the 1970s the elevated public awareness of environmental issues promoted by events such as the first Earth Day in April 1970 and the publication of popular books—including Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) and Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* (1968)—reinforced his assertion that the Smithsonian and other museums needed to act as "social planetariums" that could inform

[464] Ripley, *The Sacred Grove*, 101.

visitors of the "dim pathways" that potentially awaited them in the future.[465] He was not alone in this opinion. As historian Jeffrey Stine and others have shown, museum educators and social planners organized by groups such as the American Association of Museums (AAM) and UNESCO had also begun brainstorming strategies for how best to convey messages about human impact on the environment via museums.[466] As an early advocate for the museum's use for conservation research and public education, Ripley's work at the Smithsonian offered a concrete example of the efficacy of this method. In a publication sponsored by the AAM, Alma Wittlin detailed Ripley's efforts to exhibit ecology, which she called the "hottest (or should-be hottest) issue" of the period.[467] Relying heavily on a 1966 article that outlined his ecological program for the Institution, she commented on how the presentation of ecology in museums did not need to "limit itself to the effects and reactions of inorganic substances" but ought to include "behaviors of organisms which are both affected by and are affecting social conditions."[468] Repeating Ripley's arguments in this piece, she concluded that expanding conceptions of ecology involved the "interlocking of biology and anthropology, and to human ecology" and commented on how some museums of natural history—including at the Smithsonian—had begun to transition into "museums of man and nature."[469] She further emphasized the connection between ecology and anthropology with a nod to Lévi-

[465] S. Dillon Ripley, "Premise," *The Fitness of Man's Environment* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1968), 12.
[466] For examples of some of these initiatives, see American Association of Museums, *Museums and the Environment: A Handbook for Education* (New York: Arkville Press, 1971), James A. Oliver, "Museum Education and Human Ecology," *Museum News* 48 (1970): 28-30, and the articles in the UNESCO publication *Museum*, especially volume 25 (1973). For discussions on the continued challenges of integrating environmental history within science museum displays, see Jeffrey Stine, "Environmental History on Display," *Environmental History* 7 (2002): 566-588, and, Peter Davis, *Museums and the Natural Environment* (London: Leicester University Press, 1996), 51-52.
[467] Alma S. Wittlin, *Museums: In Search of a Usable Future* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1970), 183.
[468] Wittlin, *Museums*, 184.
[469] Ibid.

Strauss's 1965 speech (the same one credited with catalyzing urgent anthropology) and asked whether humans were equally "in danger of eroding our natural resources as well as our memories of the past."[470] Finally, she highlighted the need to preserve both biological and cultural diversity by protecting endangered resources within the museum, noting how "the research of tomorrow depends on the recording and maintenance of museum materials today."[471] Though brief, her assessment of the Smithsonian's ecological vision under Ripley revealed the centrality of humans as essential factors not only in promoting environmental stewardship, but as units of study in their own right. By performing the dual function of educating the public about changes within their social as well as their environmental surroundings, the future Museum of Man would ultimately cultivate an exhibit-based approach to the study and display of human ecology.

Though focused on slightly different aspects of the Museum's development, Ripley and Tax largely agreed on the collaborative and interdisciplinary possibilities of a new structure dedicated to exploring the relationship between humans and the environment, broadly conceived. More importantly, both considered the strategy of mutual education cultivated within a Museum of Man as the fundamental mechanism for carrying out plans for action anthropology, international diplomacy, and for a museum-based approach to human ecology. These idealistic aspirations, however, remained grounded in the administrative realities of funding uncertainties, persistent factionalism (especially among the Institution's anthropologists), and rising scrutiny from Congress over the use of government monies.

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[470] Ibid.
[471] Wittlin, *Museums*, 185.

Phase III. A Solution to Administrative Turmoil: Consolidating Anthropology in a Museum of Man (1970-1973)

Considerations about the place of the Museum of Man within the Smithsonian's larger infrastructure came into sharp focus by the end of the 1960s as the administration became involved with the early planning for the 1976 U.S. Bicentennial. Ripley intended the Institution's participation in the event as an opportunity to organize thematic programs and exhibits celebrating the nation's past two centuries of progress while keeping in mind the question of how the country might "draw from the past the strength, the fortitude, and the ingenuity needed to face the crises of today and tomorrow."[472] The proposed construction of the Museum of Man soon became incorporated in these discussions as a means to illustrate "American contributions to the solution of problems in the human sciences."[473] Additionally, the Institution planned to highlight its leadership in the human sciences through the publication of an updated *Handbook of North American Indians*, managed and edited by former BAE Curator William Sturtevant.[474] Because both the *Handbook* and the Museum of Man had been included as part of the research-based activities of the Center for the Study of Man, Tax, as the Center's acting director, held ultimate responsibility for overseeing their progress.

By this point, however, Tax had grown increasingly disinterested in the internal workings and disagreements among the Smithsonian staff and had begun to conceive of ways to integrate what he viewed as the strengths of the Center with his larger

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[472] "Countdown 1976," *Smithsonian Institution American Revolution Bicentennial News* 1 (November 1969): 1. As found in CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, "USA 200" Bi-Centennial Projects, NAA.
[473] Samuel Stanley to John Slocum, "Bi-Centennial," March 13, 1970, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, "USA 200" Bi-Centennial Projects, NAA.
[474] For an abridged history of the early planning of revised *Handbook*, see Adrianna Link, Igor Krupnik, and William Merrill, "The Birth of the Smithsonian *Handbook of North American Indians, 1964-1971*," in *The Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 1*, ed. Igor Krupnik, series editor William C. Sturtevant (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, forthcoming).

involvement in world and action anthropology. In particular, he sought to distance the Center's organization of international task forces from the hodge-podge of programs that had been administratively tied together under the Center's structure. In a letter to Ripley, Galler revealed that Tax had "admitted somewhat ruefully that the Smithsonian members of the Center, i.e. those whom he had selected from the Department of Anthropology, joined not so much from a desire to evolve interdisciplinary programs as their desire to be relieved of curatorial responsibilities and also to engage in a game of 'upmanship' with some of the members of the Department of Anthropology."[475] This internal competition escalated following the election of anthropologist Clifford Evans as Department Chair in January 1970, whose noted rivalry with William Sturtevant may have prompted his assertion that activities such as the *Handbook* and urgent anthropology belonged under the oversight of the Department and not the Center.[476] Other members of the staff had also been wary of Evans's election, noting that the factionalism was "so firmly established, so polarized, and so pervasive" that no existing member of the Department could effectively take on the role as chair. According to them, the only "permanent solution" to the internal divisions could come from establishing a Museum of Man with "a new Director (from the outside) with a strong mandate and several additional positions" who could in turn "dilute the existing factions and radically change the

[475] Sidney Galler to Dillon Ripley, "The Status of the Center for the Study of Man," February 10, 1970, RU 108, box 8, folder: Man, Center for the Study of [folder 1], SIA.
[476] Clifford Evans to S. R. Galler, "Attached Letter from Sol Tax regarding Center for the Study of Man's Conversion to Center for Advanced Studies," April 17, 1970, RU 108, box 8, folder: Man, Center for the Study of [folder 1], SIA. This rivalry is discussed in part in William L. Merrill, "William Curtis Sturtevant, Anthropologist," in *Anthropology, History, and American Indians: Essays in Honor of William Curtis Sturtevant*, edited by William L. Merrill and Ives Goddard (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002), 23.

administrative, social, and personal environment which has thus far supported the factions."[477]

Faced with this situation, Tax made several attempts to remove the Center from Washington altogether, leaning on the interests of the international constituency of the CSM to transform it into an advanced studies center modeled after those found at Princeton and Stanford. He himself had been invited to be a Fellow at Stanford's Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences during the 1969-1970 term, an honor he shared with Indian sociologist and CSM member M. N. Srinivas. During this time, he learned of plans to convert the former San Francisco Mint Building into a satellite campus for the Smithsonian on the West Coast. He urged Ripley to seriously consider such a proposal as a means to create a proper headquarters for the Center for the Study of Man and as an opportunity to make the Museum of Man a reality. "A museum of Man in Washington is an eventual necessity," he wrote, "but meanwhile a Smithsonian Museum of Man can be immediately established."[478]

Shortly after writing this letter, however, the Smithsonian's Board of Regents rejected the proposal to create a "Smithsonian West," citing budget cuts and the primary dispersal of funds towards covering programs for the upcoming Bicentennial.[479] This decision in turn prompted renewed efforts from the Center's international members to push for moving anthropology beyond its ivory tower through the organization of interdisciplinary task forces on topics including overpopulation, race relations, human

[477] Divisional Supervisors, Department of Anthropology to Richard Cowan, "Chairman, Department of Anthropology (your memorandum of October 1)," October 14, 1969, RU 108, box 9, folder: Anthropology, Dept. of., July-December 1970, SIA.
[478] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, March 19, 1970, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Center for the Study of Man (cont'd), NAA.
[479] Dillon Ripley to Gordon B. Hunt, 3 April 1970, included with Dillon Ripley to Sol Tax, April 26, 1970, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Center for the Study of Man (cont'd), NAA.

adaptation to changing environmental conditions, and cross-cultural communications. While they concluded the United States and the Smithsonian could serve as an adequate host for such a program, they warned Ripley that without immediate efforts to secure its infrastructure, a globally oriented Center for the Study of Man would soon "lose its credibility in the international scholarly world of anthropology."[480]

For his part, Tax quickly moved past the failure of "Smithsonian West" and sought outside support from private philanthropies—including the Harris and Ford Foundations—to transfer the Center's activities to the University of Chicago.[481] There, he argued, the Center's activities could be combined with the publication of *Current Anthropology*, which would provide the primary means of global communication as it had done with the organization of urgent anthropology.[482] Similar to his proposition for the San Francisco Mint, he also reasoned that removing the Center from Washington and relocating it to Chicago offered the best way to secure the future of a Museum of Man representing the "widest possible view of Man" by ensuring the integration of the "international perspective of our foreign colleagues."[483] Furthermore, having the Center based in Chicago would facilitate his ability to include it as part of the program for the 9th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences scheduled to take place there in 1973.[484] Moving the Center to Chicago would thus allow him to consolidate the majority of his projects in world anthropology in one place, making it

[480] Fredrik Barth, Surajit Sinha, Laila El Hamamsy to Dillon Ripley, May 19, 1970, RU 108, box 8, folder: Man, Center for the Study of [folder 1], SIA.
[481] Sol Tax to Robert McCormick Adams, July 1, 1970, Tax Papers, box 193, folder 6, SCRC, UChicago.
[482] Ibid.
[483] Sol Tax to Bert Hoselitz, "Use of Harris Funds…," October 21, 1970, Tax Papers, box 193, folder 6, SCRC, UChicago.
[484] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Center for the Study of Man Programs and Budget, September 24, 1970," Tax Papers, box 196, folder 4, SCRC, UChicago.

easier for him to provide strong leadership and to pinpoint opportunities for collaboration.

It is unsurprising, then, that when Ripley asked Tax to continue as the Center's acting director for the 1971 fiscal year, Tax stipulated that he would only do so from Chicago. While outwardly pessimistic about the future state of Smithsonian anthropology and its continued tendency to "conform again to the museum emphasis on individual research," he remained enthusiastic about the potential of the Center for the Study of Man to provide a concrete solution to the old contradiction between pure and applied research—a problem at the heart of his philosophy of action anthropology.[485] Speaking to anthropology's commitment to treating cultures on their own terms via detached observation, he commented that the expectations imposed on anthropologists by governments or local populations to identify solutions to specific social and cultural problems were in turn framed by the observations and perceptions of those seeking them.

Similarly, Tax noted that one of the reasons anthropologists had failed to become effective agents in implementing policy was because of their tendency to either conform to the views (and the bias) of those identifying social problems or an impulse to retreat from them in favor of less politically or ethically charged scientific concerns. As a result of these tendencies, perspectives from the human sciences, though often crucial, remained absent from social policy decisions. He argued that the Center for the Study of Man could overcome this obstacle because of its organizational structure as a group of international, interdisciplinary scientists who, through their individual representation of specific national and disciplinary perspectives, could uniformly apply their perspectives as human scientists to identifying and proposing solutions to universal human

[485] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, August 21, 1970, Tax Papers, box 196, folder 4, SCRC, UChicago.

problems.[486] In other words, the task force structure of the Center for the Study of Man would fundamentally reorient the way anthropologists approached the human sciences and their role within it. For this to happen, however, Tax needed to remove it from any temptation to fall back on more traditional approaches to anthropological research, as had continued to happen time and time again within the Smithsonian. As for the Center's relationship to the proposed Museum of Man, he maintained his view that a Museum focused on providing public education on the human sciences was imperative, but that it ought to move beyond the scope originally established at the Smithsonian.

Meanwhile, Ripley, aided by his administrative assistants, strategized his own way around the factionalism of the Smithsonian's anthropologists. Whereas Tax called for removing the CSM from the Institution in order to safeguard it from internal squabbles, the administration argued for positioning it more centrally within the Smithsonian's plans to develop human ecology within a museum context. Reflecting on the rationale behind the 1965 merger, Ripley admitted that the Smithsonian's anthropologists did, in fact, represent two functions. He noted that the research-oriented spirit of the former BAE persisted in the international pursuit of urgent anthropology and that instead of "Powell's concerns with American Indians…many tasks in anthropology today are more interesting to 'outward'-looking anthropologists rather than those who have chosen to concern themselves with careers in anthropological specialities as found among curators in an anthropological museum department."[487] He equated the interests of this group with the Institution's marine biologists and ecologists and called for renewed

[486] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, August 21, 1970, Tax Papers, box 196, folder 4, SCRC, UChicago.
[487] Dillon Ripley to Mssrs. Bradley, Galler, Blitzer, Warner, Wheeler, Ritterbush, Taylor, Powers, Jameson, Pouliot, Kautz, "Center for the Study of Man-Anthropology-Museum of Man," July 31, 1970, Assistant Secretary for Science, circa 1963-1986, Record Unit 329, box 3, folder 3: Center for the Study of Man, SIA.

efforts to assess the place and budget for the Center, either as a "bureau, a separate museum, or a service function to anthropologists everywhere."[488] He specified that in addition to hosting anthropologists, the Center should include a "social ecologist or social biologist" to participate and perhaps even manage its activities. He urged his executive board to once again treat in earnest the need to find space for such a program and to form yet another committee that could determine a better organizational structure for the Center and the Museum at the Smithsonian.

Assistant Secretary for Science Sidney Galler warned Ripley that creating another committee might do more harm than good, noting that earlier committees had, effectively, become sounding boards for the departmental stresses of the various camps. The main issue, it seemed, was Ripley's decision to link the Museum of Man to the Center for the Study of Man, an act which in Galler's view "inadvertently heightened the paranoia and accentuated the organizational parochialism" within the Institution.[489] While he argued that the Center could (and should) contribute to the development of the Museum by providing a blueprint for the kinds of topics that could be incorporated into future exhibits, he recommended separating the Center from the Museum altogether and seconded Tax's idea of basing the Center at the University of Chicago, where it could receive additional monetary and administrative support.[490] Yet Ripley maintained his position that the Center ought to remain in Washington and commented that moving it to Chicago would dilute its Smithsonian flavor and that the "whole effort to boost the

[488] Ibid.
[489] Sidney Galler to Dillon Ripley, "Planning for a Museum of Man," August 7, 1970, RU 108, box 8, folder: Man, Center for the Study of [folder 1], SIA.
[490] Sidney Galler to Dillon Ripley, "Future Status of the Center for the Study of Man," December 21, 1970, RU 108, box 8, folder: Man, Center for the Study of [folder 2], SIA.

intellectual climate of Wash [*sic*] by the SI [would be] lost."[491] Although Ripley agreed with Galler's opinion that the Center's activities had morphed into an expanded version of the original Bureau of American Ethnology, now focused more broadly on the human sciences, he could not perceive any reason to completely sever its connection to the Department of Anthropology, claiming it provided a "clear administrative hooker."[492] In his view, the ties between the research component of the Center, the public education function of the Museum, and the grounding of both, symbolically or otherwise, within Smithsonian anthropology remained critical to his plans for a synthetic, museum-based program in human ecology.

These continued administrative discussions about the Center's relation to the Museum of Man and the Smithsonian further contributed to the gradual shift away from the vision of a museum for human sciences towards one primarily grounded in human ecology and environmentalism. In January 1971, Galler left his position as Assistant Secretary for Science and was replaced by David Challinor, a conservationist and longtime friend of Ripley's.[493] Under Challinor and through Galler's suggestion, by March the Center had been divided into two branches, one for research and one for education. The research branch would organize workshops and conferences using the task force model established by the CSM council the year before, while the education branch

[491] Ripley handwritten comments on Sidney Galler to Dillon Ripley, "Future Status of the Center for the Study of Man," December 21, 1970, RU 108, box 8, folder: Man, Center for the Study of [folder 1], SIA.
[492] Ibid.
[493] Challinor, who held degrees in forestry and biology, first worked with Ripley as Deputy Director of the Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale beginning in 1960. He remained there until 1965 when Ripley recruited him to come to the Smithsonian. While there is no biography on Challinor, his administrative and scientific achievements are briefly outlined in high-profile obituaries in the New York Times and Washington Post. See Jeremy Pearce, "David Challinor, 87, Conservationist," *The New York Times*, March 24, 2008, A21; Patricia Sullivan, "Smithsonian Official David Challinor, 87," *The Washington Post Online*, March 18, 2008, accessed April 10, 2016, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/18/AR2008031801057.html.

would interpret the results for publication and for exhibits for the Museum of Man.[494] Tax would oversee both of these from Chicago, while Sam Stanley would manage the Center activities still based in Washington (specifically urgent anthropology, a program on American Indians, plans for a National Anthropological Film Center, and the preparation of the *Handbook*).

Heartened by the freedom afforded by this redistribution of responsibilities, Tax announced the Center would move ahead with the first two task forces, one on human fertility, which he argued aligned the topic of overpopulation more closely with anthropology, and one exploring an anthropological approach to environmental degradation. Since the majority of the Center's Smithsonian budget was tied to its D.C. activities, he proposed coordinating the task forces with his work with the Wenner-Gren Foundation and with the planning for the 1973 International Conference of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences at Chicago.[495] This arrangement proved successful for the next few years, as Tax's international networks and external funding connections made it possible for him to neatly fold the Center's programs with his other projects.[496] Yet because his primary focus was on the research aims of the Center and their contribution to the global expansion of the human sciences (through action

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[494] Sol Tax to Colleague, March 5, 1971, Gibson Papers, box 132, folder: Comment on CSM (and other Memos), NAA.
[495] Sol Tax to Dell Hymes, Irven Devore, Douglas Schwartz, George Stocking, Sherwood Washburn, March 5, 1971, Gibson Papers, box 132, folder: Comment on CSM (and other Memos), NAA.
[496] From 1971-1974, Tax organized planning sessions for the Center's international constituency in Cairo (1972), hosted a number of pre-planning conferences on topics including drug and alcohol use, warfare, ethnicity, and other topics included at the 1973 ICAES meeting in Chicago, integrated Center topics as part of the ICAES's official program, and, ran a workshop on anthropological approaches to the study of overpopulation, the results of which were published as *The Cultural Consequences of Population Change: Report of a Seminar Held in Bucharest, Romania, August 14-17, 1974* (Washington, D.C.: The Center for the Study of Man, Smithsonian Institution, 1975). For a brief overview of these and Tax's other concurrent activities, see George W. Stocking, Jr., "'Do Good, Young Man': Sol Tax and the World Mission of Liberal Democratic Anthropology," in *Excluded Ancestors, Inventible Traditions*, ed. Richard Handler (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), 237-246.

anthropology), the Center's educational branch, and particularly those programs under Stanley's control at the Smithsonian, slowly fell to the wayside. As Tax became further distanced from the day-to-day activities of Smithsonian anthropology, the administration, and especially David Challinor, convinced Ripley to downgrade Tax's involvement from Acting Director to part-time consultant.[497] While Tax happily accepted this decision as it allowed him to concentrate his energies on his projects and teaching responsibilities in Chicago, it left the fate of the Center's future largely up to Stanley and returned the focus of the Museum of Man to the interests of those residing in Washington.

Phase IV. A Museum for the Family of Man and his Environment (1972-1974)

The idea of the Museum of Man featured prominently in Ripley's plans for the Smithsonian as he approached the completion of his first decade as Secretary. During these years, the Institution had expanded considerably, both in terms of its programming and its physical size. By 1973, Ripley had opened or authorized construction of four museums (the Anacostia Museum, opened in 1967; the Cooper-Hewitt Design Museum, transferred to the Smithsonian in 1968; the Hirshhorn Museum of Art and Sculpture Garden, which broke ground in 1968 and completed construction in 1974; and the National Air and Space Museum, which held its groundbreaking ceremony in November 1972 and was completed in time for the start of the Bicentennial celebration in July 1976), and had organized or expanded the operations of nearly a dozen scientific and cultural centers (including the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, which hosted its

[497] David Challinor to Dillon Ripley, "Status of Sol Tax," July 31, 1972, RU 108, box 16, folder: Center for the Study of Man (1972-1973), SIA.

first festival in the summer of 1967).[498] Nonetheless, he continued to push for the creation of one final museum that would complement the exhibits featured in these new facilities and reflect his developing thoughts on human ecology. Perhaps influenced by an idea first articulated by Museum of History and Technology Director Frank Taylor in 1971, Ripley also conceived of the proposed museum as one synthesizing the various facets of the Institution, expanding beyond the integration of the social and biological sciences into a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship of humans and their natural and built environments.[499]

In his opening comments to the 1972 annual report, he reflected on how the growing presence of the Institution on the National Mall necessitated the construction of new roads and infrastructure to accommodate the influx of tourists who would make their way to Washington in the next few years. He connected the struggles of urban planners and engineers, who would have to determine the most efficient traffic patterns to allow for the maximum number of visitors, with the investigations of anthropologists studying instances of human adaptation and variations in the ability for some populations to live in close proximity with other groups. [500] Though seemingly arbitrary, Ripley's thematic linking of the problems facing anthropologists and city planners suggests an extension of his prior thinking on the study of the relationship of humans with the environment. Although he had always held a broad view of how perspectives from the social scientists

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[498] William O. Craig briefly summarizes these and other accomplishments in his book on the Smithsonian's international contributions, which largely focuses on the programs and additions developed during Ripley's administration. See William O. Craig, *Around the World with the Smithsonian* (Plantation, FL.: Llumina Press, 2004). More detailed accounts on individual projects and museums can also be found at the website for the Smithsonian Institution Archives (www.siarchives.si.edu).

[499] Frank A. Taylor, "The Museum of Man and Environment," November 24, 1971, RU 108, box 16, folder: Center for the Study of Man (1972-1973), SIA.

[500] *Smithsonian Year, 1972: Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for the Year Ended 30 June 1972* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1972), 11.

might contribute to the work of conservationists, his prior discussions of humans tended to rely on biological analogs that equated them with other animal populations living and interacting with their natural surroundings. This newer focus on the interactions of humans living within cities coincided with larger moves in ecology towards the study of the stresses and capacity of urban environments, especially as the world's population numbers continued to escalate in the early years of the 1970s.[501]

In some ways, this shift also mirrored the transformations taking place within urgent anthropology (and cultural anthropology more generally), which by this time had largely moved away from its concentration on so-called isolated or "primitive" societies towards the documentation of complex communities undergoing change. Ripley, however, still conceived of urgent anthropology as a primarily salvage enterprise, referring to its activities as the "last residues of that program of explorers…to record the languages and artifacts of the American Indian before they became extinct."[502] While he lamented the disappearance of unique cultural forms and called upon museum curators to do their part in recording "the creativity of the human spirit" he nonetheless argued that the study of human adaptability should not solely be left to anthropologists and should be dealt with more holistically within a Museum of Man. In turn, he argued that such a museum needed to expand beyond the model set by most museums of anthropology, which he described as preserving "legacies of extinction" through an emphasis on collections representing vanished cultures as opposed to contemporary ones.[503] He called for the rebirth of anthropological exhibits within a modern Museum of Man that would

[501] On the development of urban ecology within the Ecological Society of America, see "Toward an Urban Ecology," *Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America* 49 (1971): 2-6.
[502] *Smithsonian Year 1972*, 11.
[503] *Smithsonian Year 1972*, 12.

serve as a "museum of social and technological history and as such a matter of great moment and concern to us all whether we are American Indians, Caucasians, or members of any other ethnic subdivision."[504] Commenting on current events and the social demonstrations surrounding the Vietnam War and the American Civil Rights Movement, he noted the Museum's potential importance to the American public, who could be reminded through its exhibits as much about the similarities of human beings as their differences. Yet not to ignore the value of preserving ethnological specimens, he reminded his readers of the "quantities of relevant data in the reactions of tribal people to the inroads of civilization" contained in existing museum collections.[505] While his thinking about the emphasis on human ecology in the museum had changed somewhat, he maintained that museums benefited from having strong expertise in the social sciences and particularly in anthropology, since through a balanced view of the relationship of humans and the environment the "urbanized museum-visitor [could] realize how alienated he has become from the natural world."[506]

The significance of human ecology in the Museum of Man had thus begun to take on a dual form. On the one hand, Ripley acknowledged the limitations of anthropology in determining its shape, and emphasized a need to devise a forward-looking museum on the Mall that could anticipate and respond to a variety of social and scientific issues. On the other hand, he could not ignore the museum's fundamental purpose as a storehouse for scientific data and its obligation to preserve a record of the past and to safeguard those species—or cultures—on the brink of extinction. These ideas became rhetorically linked in his conceptualization of the Museum of Man as one for the "family of man," a phrase

[504] Ibid.
[505] Ibid.
[506] S. Dillon Ripley, "Museums and the Natural Heritage," *Museum* 25 (1973): 11.

he began employing in publications and reports around 1974. As William Walker and Peggy Levitt have discussed, this idea tied in well with the message of cultural pluralism being projected by the Smithsonian around the time of the Bicentennial and especially the notion of America as a melting pot made up of different ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds.[507] Yet the concept also worked for Ripley on a scientific level and supported his understanding of humans as "one species with many cultures"—a visualization which aided his arguments about the importance of maintaining cultural as well as biological diversity within ecosystems.[508] He integrated these concepts in the April 1974 issue of *Smithsonian Magazine*, where he again emphasized the use of museums for international diplomacy via open education. This time, he referenced the 1973-1974 Oil Crisis precipitated by the Yom Kippur War and stressed the need for new educational tools that could demonstrate the interdependence of the world's economic and cultural systems—a task he believed could be achieved through a museum of the Family of Man. "In such a museum," he wrote, "we could express our diversity, celebrate our kinship and, at the same time, bring ourselves to realize the urgency of mending our ways."[509] Congruently, he noted that a museum organized around the theme of the "Family of Man" could address the topic of environmental degradation and human responsibility by using images of "the scarred surfaces of the Earth, the mauled land and

[507] Walker, *A Living Exhibition*, 209-210; Peggy Levitt, *Artifacts and Allegiances: How Museums Put the Nation and the World on Display* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 53.
[508] I am borrowing this phrase from Wilton Dillon, who in turn took it from the theme of the 1973 International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in order to describe Ripley's ideas about the integration of the human and ecological sciences in a Museum of Man. See Wilton S. Dillon, "Imagining a Museum of Humankind," in *Smithsonian Stories: Chronicle of a Golden Age, 1964-1984* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2015), 213.
[509] S. Dillon Ripley, "The View from the Castle," *Smithsonian Magazine* (1974): 4.

the marching deserts" to remind visitors of humankind's ability to alter their surroundings.[510]

In Ripley's mind, the ties between international cooperation and global conservation were at the core of what he called the "paradox of the human condition"—an idea he developed in a two-part lecture given in 1975 as part of the Sir Dorab Tata Memorial Lecture series in India.[511] In it, he discussed the interdependence of ecological systems and the influence of human beings on other species, using the far-reaching effects of the Aswan Dam in Egypt on algae production, and, in turn, on the livelihood of other species, as an example of how instances of human development in one nation could in turn modify environmental conditions in neighboring countries. He argued that modern-day reliance on technology had created disequilibrium and inequality, both in terms of economic development and in terms of environmental accountability, and between what he referred to as countries belonging in categories of the "haves" and the "have-nots", and that it was up to the scientists, particularly ecologists, to help inform policy at a supranational rather than an individual level.[512] He emphasized that this could be aided by recognizing instances of diversity in the human spirit and particularly those expressed in communities that had resisted cultural homogenization.[513]

For example, he cited the persistence of nomadic lifestyles among certain groups of people as evidence of the ability of humans to exist beyond the constraints of national boundaries. Connecting these communities to counterculture and resistance movements

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[510] Ibid.
[511] S. Dillon Ripley, *The Paradox of the Human Condition: A Scientific and Philosophic Exposition of the Environmental and Ecological Problems that Face Humanity* (India: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, Ltd., 1975). As Ripley notes on p. 4, his title comes from Jacob Bronowski's introductory remarks in *The Ascent of Man*. See Adrian Malone and Jacob Bronowski, "Lower than the angels," *The Ascent of Man* (New York, NY: Ambrose Video Pub.,1988 [1974]).
[512] Ripley, *Paradox of the Human Condition*, 34.
[513] Ripley, *Paradox of the Human Condition*, 52.

in both developed and developing nations, he urged his audience to take heed of the subtle message being put forward by these groups: "The people of our world in their inchoate strivings are telling the rulers or the governors of the nations something we should stop for a moment and listen to. Perhaps in their folkways exist patterns of true interdependence for the future, and perhaps, in this we can learn, those of us who live in urban centres, careless of the earth, how much we still must learn…in understanding if not enlightenment."[514] He implored his listeners to seek new educational tools—including museums—that could help get this message across and that "any method, any means may help in unknown ways to create an understanding of the reality of our interdependence." "I have long believed," he told them, "that there should be demonstrable methods, for which so far universities are not prepared, to develop an understanding of the importance of the family, the clan, the tribe, all unitary parts of a larger family, the family of man."[515] Echoing points made in earlier publications, in his view these methods could help solve the paradox of the human condition by promoting education as the primary tool for unifying the world's populations.

The rhetorical weight of the family of man concept had unforeseen administrative applications as well. Despite the success of the first half of his Secretaryship, by the mid-1970s Ripley's good will with Congress had begun to wane. The exorbitant amount of government funds used to establish many of the Smithsonian's new programs and museums during the 1960s and early 1970s resulted in a review of the Institution's expenditures and the decreased availability of additional federal appropriations.[516]

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[514] Ripley, *Paradox of the Human Condition*, 54.
[515] Ripley, *Paradox of the Human Condition*, 33.
[516] Constance Holden, "Smithsonian: 'The Nation's Attic' Undergoing New Federal Scrutiny," *Science* 196 (1977): 857-860. Neil Harris also discusses the politics of these reviews and their relationship to Ripley's

Moreover, insistence from Congress as well as from members of the Smithsonian Council that the administration concentrate on planning the Bicentennial meant that the construction of a physical Museum of Man remained at a standstill. Nonetheless, Ripley continued to push the concept as a necessary capstone to the transformation of the Mall under his tenure. At a budgeting meeting to establish funding priorities for the upcoming years, he challenged those present to think of a "Museum for the Family of Man" not as an independent structure but as a synthesis of those interests already found at the Smithsonian, only organized around the message of human interdependence rather than a particular set of objects.[517] Describing it as a "grassroots museum educational process" with "dimensions we cannot yet begin to grasp" he called for the bureau heads to develop themes that would cut across the Institution's departmental lines.[518]

As with his earlier thoughts about the advantages of museums over universities, the ability to foster interdisciplinary collaboration remained essential. This time, however, he perceived these collaborations as extending beyond the natural and social sciences to encompass all aspects of the Smithsonian. Leaning on the theme of cultural pluralism proposed for the Bicentennial, he argued that a Museum of the Family of Man could be used to create "a summing up of the American experience, a synthesis of all that we have learned, the interaction of man on this part of the planet, the interface between ourselves and our environment."[519] Once again, he distanced the association of the

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efforts to increase the Smithsonian's influence in the art world in his monograph on Washington's culture wars. See Neil Harris, "The Secretary Carries On: Consolidating Dillon Ripley's Administration," in *Capital Culture: J. Carter Brown, the National Gallery of Art, and the Reinvention of the Museum Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 287-323.

[517] "Smithsonian Institution Summation of Priorities Conference Held at the Belmont Conference Center," March 25, 1974, RU 329, box 2, folder: Belmont Meetings, SIA.

[518] Ibid.

[519] *Smithsonian Year, 1974: Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for the Year Ended 30 June 1974* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974), 8.

Museum of Man from anthropology, noting that as a "kind of biological discipline" museums of anthropology had tended to concentrate on displays of primitive man, leaving exhibits of modern civilizations aside. "This situation," he wrote, "has now begun to change. In Washington we are thinking of drawing from everything that our museums, whether of natural history, history of science, culture and technology, or art museums, are exhibiting, each in its own way. We are concerned here with a new concept, a synthesis of the whole family of man and how it got that way"[520]

The enthusiasm for a final museum coalescing and expanding upon the Smithsonian's existing programs generated a number of responses that, while favorable, in some ways downplayed the urgency of constructing a separate structure. Deputy Director of the National Zoo Edward Kohn offered the idea that the Smithsonian in its entirety could be mobilized as "the Museums of Man," with each of the existing facilities covering one topic (for example, Natural History would take on "Man, Land and Ethos," the art galleries, "Man and Creativity," and Air and Space could address the theme of "Man and Space").[521] With these themes covered elsewhere, he suggested that perhaps a new building should concentrate on an unrepresented aspect of human/environment interactions and proposed a museum devoted to "Man and the Sea."[522] A different approach from Under Secretary Robert Brooks outlined a museum featuring art forms, scientific instruments, and other examples of human ingenuity centered on the theme of human achievement and civilization—a proposal not too dissimilar from the original

[520] *Smithsonian Year 1974*, 10.
[521] Edward Kohn to Dillon Ripley, "Man and the Sea," January 19, 1973, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Museum of Man, NAA.
[522] Edward Kohn to Dillon Ripley, "Man and the Sea," January 19, 1973, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Museum of Man, NAA.

concept for the Museum of History and Technology.[523] One of the most outlandish concepts came from Gordon Vaeth, Director of System Engineering at the National Environmental Satellite Service, who suggested that a Museum of Man could instead be built as a "flying museum" using a moderately sized dirigible that would prevent encroachment upon the remaining physical space on the Mall. Likewise, an "airship museum" had the advantage of being able to travel outside of Washington, and, in his words, could "penetrate deep into the interiors of LDCs (Less Developed Countries), land, and moor there for some few days, while bringing the message of the Family of Man (also the message of American friendship) where such might otherwise not be known."[524] From a design perspective, Vaeth also assured Ripley a floating structure would prove "environmentally attractive and ecologically non-disrupting."[525] While each of these ideas would have incorporated Ripley's social and scientific interests, none of them proved compelling enough to justify the establishment of a distinct museum.

Despite lacking a concrete plan for the Museum of Man, in 1975 Ripley succeeded in obtaining permission from Congress to build a museum (albeit one without a specified purpose) on the final spot of the Mall.[526] Yet as William Walker has shown, unclear focus continued to impede its development, as the construction of a museum without a distinct set of objects but that nonetheless sought to synthesize the Smithsonian's activities around a unified theme proved administratively too problematic

[523] Robert Brooks, "Museum of Mankind: A Personal Prospectus," May 15, 1974, Record Unit 254, Assistant Secretary for Science, 1963-1978, box 1, folder: Center for the Study of Man – 1974, SIA.
[524] J. Gordon Vaeth to Dillon Ripley, March 4, 1974, RU 108, box 16, folder: Center for the Study of Man (1972-1973), SIA.
[525] Ibid.
[526] John Jameson to Messrs. Ripley, Blitzer, Challinor, Euell, Perrot, Powers, Wheeler, Ault, Warner and Hindle, "Reorganizing for the Museum of Man and Related Activities," July 22, 1976, RU 329, box 3, folder 2: Center for the Study of Man, SIA.

for an Institution in the midst of financial and departmental reorganization.[527] From an intellectual standpoint, it also undermined Ripley's ability to fine-tune his vision of human ecology in the museum and diminished the bridging of the human and ecological sciences that had once been at the center of his thinking. Without a firm conceptual framework or building plan, the Museum became a convenient administrative catch-all for ideas and programs that did not quite fit with the rest of the Institution's activities. Incidentally, this returned conversations to the topic of the appropriateness of anthropology's ties to Natural History, which had prompted the development of the Museum of Man idea in the first place.

Phase V. A Museum of Anthropology (1976-1980)

In an attempt to regain momentum for the Museum's construction, several members of Ripley's administrative cabinet, including David Challinor and Charles Blitzer, proposed a review of the Smithsonian's existing programs and budgets so as to consolidate any superfluous activities. They determined that since the Museum of Man would tackle questions about human/environment interactions utilizing resources in Washington, the need for the external task forces organized by Tax via the Center for the Study of Man proved unnecessary. Additionally, they viewed those projects managed by Sam Stanley within the Smithsonian (namely the preparation of the *Handbook* and urgent anthropology) as essentially an extension of research interests held by members of the Department of Anthropology.[528] Furthermore, they worried that the recent inclusion of two new methodologically innovative programs (The Research Institute on Immigration

[527] Walker, *A Living Exhibition*, 213.
[528] David Challinor and Charles Blitzer to Dillon Ripley, "1976 Budget Review for the CSM and its Future," June 6, 1974, RU 254, box 1, folder: Center for the Study of Man – 1974, SIA.

and Ethnic Studies, created in 1973, and the National Anthropological Film Center, discussed in more detail in chapter 6) would result in projects "out of harmony" with the aims of the Museum of Man.[529] Citing the urgency of completing the *Handbook* project in time for the Bicentennial, Challinor redistributed the bulk of the Center's resources towards this task. Without any other projects to manage, he noted that this made Stanley's position as Program Coordinator unnecessary and abolished the position in January 1976.[530]

Tax questioned this decision and pointed out that by abolishing the position of Program Coordinator, Challinor would, in effect, destroy the Center entirely.[531] In a plea to Ripley to maintain the Center (and Stanley's position), Tax reminded him of the Center's centrality to the original vision of the Museum of Man and his plan to heighten the Smithsonian's contributions to the human sciences.[532] He lamented the persistent obstacles caused by administrative issues, commenting on his unhappiness with having the *Handbook* come into the Center since it had postponed other projects and was now being used to discontinue them entirely. He noted his misgivings with having relinquished authority of the Center to David Challinor, apprehension which "increased when I was given to understand that I should abandon the personal relationship which you and I have had since [we] first discussed what might be done with anthropology at the Smithsonian."[533] While Ripley's and Tax's visions for the Center for the Study of

[529] Porter Kier to David Challinor, May 31, 1974, RU 254, box 1, folder: CSM: National Anthropological Film Center 1970-1975 [2 of 2], SIA.
[530] David Challinor to Sol Tax, January 21, 1976, RU 329, box 3, folder 2: Center for the Study of Man, SIA.
[531] Sol Tax to David Challinor, January 26, 1976, Tax Papers, box 193, folder 4, SCRC, UChicago.
[532] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Center for the Study of Man," April 1, 1976, Tax Papers, box 204, folder 6, SCRC, UChicago.
[533] Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "Center for the Study of Man," April 1, 1976, Tax Papers, box 204, folder 6, SCRC, UChicago.

Man and Museum of Man had begun to diverge in the early 1970s, it is clear that Tax saw the disregard for the Center's autonomy as an indicator that their friendship as well as their intellectual partnership had deteriorated. In response, Ripley assured Tax that he still valued the important contributions to be made by the Center, but that part of the reason for its establishment had been as a way to get around problems within the Department of Anthropology, which, in his opinion, had greatly improved by the mid-1970s. He thanked Tax for his help in expanding Smithsonian anthropology and for demonstrating, through activities such as urgent anthropology, that innovative work in the social sciences could still be undertaken within a museum. Ultimately, however, he backed Challinor's decision and indicated that the Center would be placed under the authority of Porter Kier, Director of the National Museum of Natural History.[534] Doing so, he argued, would facilitate the integration of the Center's activities within Smithsonian anthropology overall and would allow the Museum of Man to become a physical reality.[535]

Kier himself had been pushing for the consolidation of the Smithsonian's anthropological research programs since his appointment as Director of NMNH in January 1973. Referencing Ripley's preliminary ideas about the importance of collaboration among researchers working across the natural sciences, he expressed reluctance to the idea of removing anthropology from Natural History. He remarked how many of the most significant projects in the field, such as studies in ethnobotany on the domestication of plants, necessitated close ties between anthropologists and those

[534] Dillon Ripley to Sol Tax, April 23, 1976, Tax Papers, box 196, folder 4, SCRC, UChicago.
[535] Dillon Ripley, "Announcement," October 28, 1976, National Anthropological Film Center (NAFC) Papers, box 6, folder: Smithsonian Institution – Correspondence, 1974-1983, Human Studies Film Archives (HSFA), Smithsonian Institution, Suitland, MD.

working in the biological and geological sciences.[536] For this reason, he argued that the activities of the Center for the Study of Man, which had been separated because of "personality conflicts with the old Office of Anthropology," should eventually be included within the Museum of Natural History. Although he supported the idea of a separate Museum of Man focused on anthropological topics, in his view it should utilize specimens and ideas already being developed in Natural History and not duplicate them. He believed that using the Center's activities to form the core of a Museum of Man or even a Museum of Native Americans (an idea also under consideration at the time) would cement the factionalism among the Smithsonian's anthropologists and that the "divisiveness and bitterness of the past would only increase."[537]

Kier's take on anthropology's proper place within Natural History generated backlash among those anthropologists committed to distancing anthropology from the natural sciences once and for all. At the time, William Sturtevant responded to Kier's memo with his own proposal for a "National Museum of Cultures" organized around anthropology that would leave "human biology and the human component of ecology" to Natural History.[538] Thus when Kier assumed responsibility for the Center two years later in July 1976 and suggested a review of its programs in order to determine the best strategies for integrating them within the Museum of Natural History, thoughts again turned to assessing what distinguished anthropology from the biological sciences.[539] Consequently, it also returned anthropology as a central consideration in the construction

[536] Porter Kier, "Anthropological Research at the Smithsonian Institution," September 20, 1974, Assistant Secretary for Science, Records, 1963-1978. Record Unit 254, box 10, folder: NMNH: Dept. of Anthropology, January-June 1974, SIA.
[537] Ibid.
[538] William Sturtevant, "Notes Toward a New National Museum of Cultures," September 25, 1970, CSM Records, box 142, folder: Stanley Papers, Museum of Man, NAA.
[539] For more on how administrative rearrangements affected the specific activities of the CSM, see chapter 6 on Film Center.

of the Museum of Man. Members of the administration stressed the Museum's future role in consolidating the Smithsonian's programs in folklife, anthropology, and the Center for the Study of Man, noting that while the Department of Anthropology should "eventually be a part of the developing organization" finding common ground on which to organize projects was still several years away.[540] In the meantime, they stipulated that responsibility for planning and managing the Museum should remain with the current Director of the Center for the Study of Man (Porter Kier) and the Assistant Secretary for Science (David Challinor).[541]

Members of the Department of Anthropology, on the other hand, rearticulated many of the same demands and justifications for a Museum of Man presented to Tax by Ewers in the mid-1960s. An anonymous memo addressed to "All of those concerned with Anthropology" enumerated a list of reasons for a separate museum that included spatial, administrative, and intellectual concerns.[542] Several months later, Curator of African Ethnology Gordon Gibson called for a return to culture as the primary focus of a Museum of Man separate from Natural History. He argued that while humans had evolved through the same biological mechanisms as other animals, many crucial human adaptations had been prompted along social and cultural lines. In his view, the "communicative, recreational, and reflective life" of human beings had so surpassed those of other animals that biological explanations proved inadequate for explaining their social and cultural

[540] John Jameson to et al, "Reorganizing for Museum of Man and Related Activities," Messrs. Ripley, Blitzer, Challinor, Euell, Perrot, Powers, Wheeler, Ault, Warner and Hindle, "Reorganizing for the Museum of Man and Related Activities," July 22, 1976, RU 329, box 3, folder 2: Center for the Study of Man, SIA.
[541] Ibid.
[542] Anonymous to All of those Concerned with Anthropology, "Reasons for a separate: Museum of Man," January 3, 1977, Gibson Papers, box 130, folder: Misc. Materials – Museum of Man, NAA.

evolution.[543] He therefore proposed a Museum of Man, reconceived as a "Museum of Cultures," that could celebrate this distinction with exhibits and research programs that would "examine the beginnings of language, art, and philosophy and trace their history, especially in the non-industrialized cultures."[544] Likewise, the Museum could present visitors with different "experiments in living" as illustrated by the behaviors of the world's diverse populations. In addition to depending upon the expertise of the Institution's anthropologists, Gibson's proposal for a Museum of Cultures drew a clear philosophical distinction between its aims and those of the Smithsonian's existing museums, thereby providing sufficient justification for the construction of an independent structure.

Discussions about anthropology's role in the Museum of Man carried on for several years following the Bicentennial, but with little movement towards its actual construction. Once again, conversations instead became tied to the reorganization of new and existing programs that, while sharing basic themes with anthropology, proved beyond the scope of the Department.[545] Of particular concern were the diverging interests of rapidly growing programs in the Center for the Study of Man, especially the National Anthropological Film Center, which sought to situate itself intellectually somewhere between the natural and humanistic sciences—a topic I will return to in the next chapter. This precipitated the organization of several review committees to assess the Center's role in defining the Smithsonian's programs in the human sciences.[546]

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[543] Gordon Gibson to Dillon Ripley, "A Museum of Cultures," September 26, 1977, Gibson Papers, box 129, folder: Statement by Gibson on rational for separate museum of cultures, NAA.
[544] Ibid.
[545] For example, beginning in 1975 Gordon Gibson and others became involved with the planning for a new Museum of African Art.
[546] David Challinor to Dillon Ripley, "Next Step for CSM," December 6, 1977, RU 329, box 3, folder: Center for the Study of Man, Search for Director, 1977-78, SIA; William Fitzhugh to Curatorial Staff,

Meanwhile, the *Handbook* project and the urgent anthropology program—activities that had once proven equally problematic for the organization of Smithsonian anthropology—found their own resolution. In 1978, after years of delay, the *Handbook* published the first of its volumes and established a separate office in the Museum of Natural History. That same year, Sam Stanley announced his retirement; responsibility for urgent anthropology in turn transferred to the Department of Anthropology, where it was placed under the management of Curator of Arctic Ethnology, Ives Goddard.[547] The transference of these projects to Natural History left the Center for the Study of Man's existence in name only, as the persistent bureaucratic struggles eventually led Tax to abandon his hope for the Smithsonian as a site for organizing world anthropology. A heart attack followed by a stroke in early 1979 also forced him into something of an early retirement (though he still wrote and spoke on problems related to action anthropology from Chicago until his death in 1995).[548]

With the gradual dissolution of the Center's activities, in 1979/1980 a final attempt was made to establish a Museum of Man, this time with anthropology strictly at its core. In December 1979, Ripley released a memo calling for the "urgent need" of constructing a Museum that could educate visitors on the past, present, and future contributions of anthropology, especially for dealing with foreign affairs.[549] Another

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Department of Anthropology, "Human Sciences/Museum of Man Concepts," 21 September 1979, Gibson Papers, box 129, folder: Memos leading up to formation of committee, NAA.

[547] William Fitzhugh to Ives Goddard, "Urgent Anthropology Program Coordinator Appointment," July 17, 1979, Records of the Department of Anthropology, U.S. National Museum/National Museum of Natural History, Series: Department of Anthropology, Urgent Anthropology, 89-15, box 1, folder: Urgent Anthropology [2 of 2], NAA. This gesture also returned the focus of "salvage" anthropology at the Smithsonian to its original focus on North America.

[548] Samuel Stanley, "Community, Action, and Continuity: A Narrative Vita of Sol Tax," *Current Anthropology* 37 (1996): S136.

[549] Dillon Ripley to David Challinor, Charles Blitzer, et al., "Museum of Man," December 23, 1979, as included in "Toward a Museum of Anthropology: Report of the Planning Group for a Strengthened

planning group, composed of members of the Department of Anthropology, the directors of the remaining Center programs, and representatives from other Smithsonian units with an interest in anthropology met to devise new strategies for a strengthened Museum of Man. Yet as with earlier attempts, no consensus could be reached. Disagreements extended to focus, organization, and even to the museum's name, with some arguing that the title Museum of Man held sexist overtones no longer acceptable within the general public.[550] The majority agreed, however, that the major obstacle facing the Museum had to do with its relationship with anthropology:

> Our committee feel that the Museum of Man idea has failed to involve anthropology, over and over again, because in each instance it has been seen as something other than anthropology…In short, a Museum of Man is an idea that lacks a discipline—it is at once everything and nothing. Our committee feels that what is needed is a National Museum of Anthropology, in which the research activities are clearly anthropological (in a broad sense) and what are exhibited are anthropological concepts.[551]

Along these lines, they called for a reconsideration of the Smithsonian's existing administrative structure and the creation of a new Assistant Secretary of the Social Sciences who could better interpret anthropology's unique position as a discipline bridging science, history, and the arts.[552] In the end, however, the repeated failures to realize the concept of an interdisciplinary Museum of Man led members of Congress and the Smithsonian Council to redirect their focus for the remaining spot on the National

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Museum of Man formed at the request of Dr. Richard S. Fiske, Director, National Museum of Natural History/Museum of Man," July 1, 1980, Gibson Papers, box 130, folder: Towards a Museum of Anthropology (bound copy), NAA.

[550] "Toward a Museum of Anthropology: Report of the Planning Group for a Strengthened Museum of Man formed at the request of Dr. Richard S. Fiske, Director, National Museum of Natural History/Museum of Man," July 1, 1980, Gibson Papers, box 130, folder: Towards a Museum of Anthropology (bound copy), NAA.

[551] "History of the Museum of Man idea in the Smithsonian," May 7, 1980, Gibson Papers, box 129, folder: extracts of papers and memos – Museum of Man, NAA.

[552] "Toward a Museum of Anthropology: Report of the Planning Group for a Strengthened Museum of Man formed at the request of Dr. Richard S. Fiske, Director, National Museum of Natural History/Museum of Man," July 1, 1980, Gibson Papers, box 130, folder: Towards a Museum of Anthropology (bound copy), NAA.

Mall towards the construction of the National Museum of the American Indian, which was authorized in 1989 and opened in 2004. This action terminated any last hopes for a separate Museum of Man and secured anthropology's place as part of the Museum of Natural History once and for all.

Phase VI. Epilogue: A Museum for Man and All His Works…of Art? Building the Quadrangle (1980-1984)

While a National Museum of Man bridging the Smithsonian's programs in anthropology and ecology never came to fruition, its underlying philosophy found new life in the South Quadrangle, constructed during the mid-1980s. Authorized in 1978 to accommodate the collections of the new Museum of African Art, the Quadrangle marked the last of Ripley's major building projects on the Mall before his retirement from the Institution in 1984. A four-acre site located adjacent to the Smithsonian Castle and built almost entirely underground (approximately 96% of the structure lies underneath the Mall), today the Quadrangle is bounded at its corners by the Museum of African Art, the Freer-Sackler Galleries, the Enid A. Haupt Garden, and the aptly-named S. Dillon Ripley Center, which contains an international gallery space as well as classrooms, an auditorium, and administrative offices. Although viewed primarily as a space for the exhibition of Asian and African art, in many ways it represents a retooled version of the Museum of Man (Figure 5.3).[553]

[553] Wilton Dillon suggests that the Quadrangle acted as a kind of "consolation prize" in lieu of the construction of the Museum of Man. Wilton Dillon, interview by author, Alexandra, VA, April 20, 2013. There is also literature that talks about the transformation of ethnographic collections from display as scientific artifacts into pieces of art. See James Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture" in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 215-251.

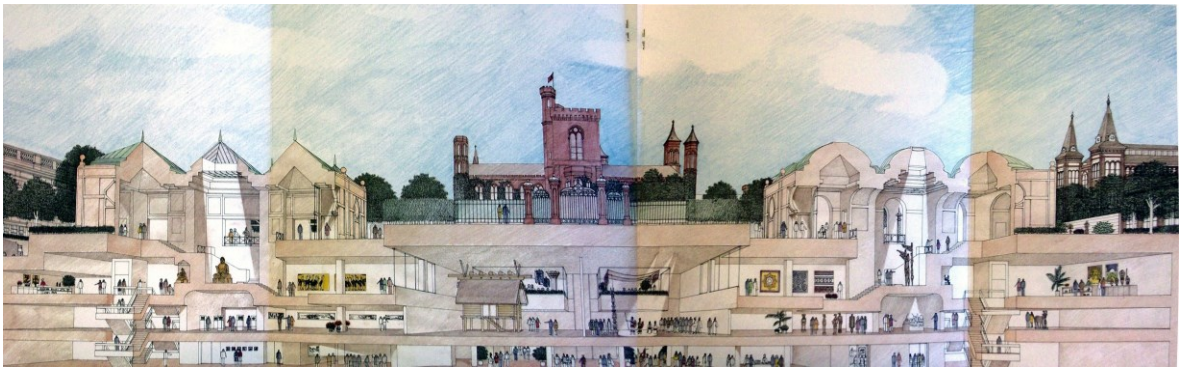

Figure 5.3. Illustration depicting layout of the Smithsonian Quadrangle, including the proposed International Center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures. From "The Quadrangle: A Center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures at the Smithsonian Institution," circa 1983, Acc. 90-87: Smithsonian/Man and the Biosphere Program Records, 1972-1989, box 3, folder: Quadrangle, SIA.

Early promotional materials referred to the Quadrangle as an international center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures and described it as "vital hub of research and dialogue, a center for the exchange of ideas between cultures."[554] Through art displays and sponsorship of visiting scholars from these regions, the Center would provide a forum for cultural outreach and public education that would "help correct the profound lack of knowledge about these critical areas of the world now prevalent among many Americans."[555] In a foreword included in one brochure, Ripley commented on the "urgent need" for the Smithsonian to expand the representation of non-Western cultures on the National Mall and perceived the purpose of the Quadrangle as a site showcasing the "dynamic traditions, cultures and history" of two-thirds of the world's population in such a way that "leaders and citizens alike of those vibrant nations may feel at home."[556]

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[554] "The International Center of the Quadrangle Center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures," circa 1983, Smithsonian/Man and the Biosphere Program Records, Acc. 90-87, 1972-1989, box 3, folder: Smithsonian International Center, SIA.
[555] "The Quadrangle: A Center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures at the Smithsonian Institution," circa 1983, Acc. 90-87, box 3, folder: Quadrangle, SIA.
[556] "The Quadrangle: A Center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures at the Smithsonian Institution," circa 1983, Acc. 90-87, box 3, folder: Quadrangle, SIA.

This aim rearticulated notions about the Museum of Man as a site for promoting cultural diplomacy through public education first outlined by Ripley and others in the mid-1970s in preparation for the Bicentennial.

Yet even more indicative of the Quadrangle's intellectual ties to the Museum of Man was its proposed organization around the themes of conservation and human survival. One outline described the focus of the International Center as coordinating collaborative research endeavors on "cultural and environmental conservation."[557] According to this plan, the term "conservation" applied equally to "endangered natural species," "the quality of the physical environment," "historic sites, monuments, and artifacts," and "living human cultures."[558] Referring to the Smithsonian's accomplishments to date in the first three of these areas, the proposal emphasized a need to build on these achievements by tackling this fourth point and cited its importance both for maintaining ecosystems and for aiding the social and political transformations of local communities undergoing change:

> The understanding of more traditional and local cultural patterns with a view toward increased viability, despite the homogenization of the 'global village', is an urgent and complex task, requiring sustained dialogue with scientists and interested parties from many countries. Distinguished anthropologists from Margaret Mead to Claude Lévi-Strauss have stressed the importance of recording and sustaining traditional cultures uniquely adapted to local conditions. Such activity preserves valuable aspects of the human experience and can contribute to an increasing sense of self-esteem and creativity in local cultures. A recent IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) Bulletin asserts that the relationship of culture to conservation is a missing link in the World Conservation Strategy. Traditional Arabian rangeland management systems (ahmia), marine conservation practices among traditional Oceanic

[557] "The International Center of the Quadrangle Center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures," circa 1983, Acc. 90-87, box 3, folder: Smithsonian International Center, SIA.
[558] Ibid.

> cultures, and Inuit adaptive lifestyles are cited as examples for prudent approaches to the wedding of natural and cultural conservation strategies.[559]

By calling for the study of local populations as part of a larger mandate for environmental and cultural conservation, this proposal shows how ideas about the Smithsonian's ability to oversee the preservation of biological and cultural diversity through a museum-based approach persisted even after the failure of the Museum of Man. Furthermore, the reference to Mead's and Lévi-Strauss's use of ethnographic salvage as an integral part of this activity demonstrates the persistent place of urgent anthropology within the Smithsonian's approach to human ecology. According to another summary statement describing the Quadrangle's purpose, this is because at their core, the study of ecology and the study of human cultures shared a preoccupation with the concept of change. Both ecology and the human sciences grappled with how change—be it ecological or social—"threatened the survival of biological and cultural forms."[560] This shared focus meant that because the problems of human and social scientists and those of biologists and ecologists existed as two sides of the same coin, the solution to those problems necessitated the integration of perspectives from both fields. As noted in the proposal, on the one hand, "the loss of species reduces genetic potential and the ability of this planet to support human life;" on the other, "the loss of cultural forms reduces our total cultural repertoire, our ability to adapt and to innovate."[561] The future of human survival thus relied equally upon the salvage and conservation of human and natural resources alike—a task uniquely suited to the research and museum structure of the Smithsonian Institution.

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[559] "The International Center of the Quadrangle Center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures," circa 1983, Acc. 90-87, box 3, folder: Smithsonian International Center, SIA.
[560] Ibid.
[561] Brian Spooner, "Conservation and Survival: Towards new approaches to the problems threatening genetic and cultural diversity," Acc. 90-87, box 3, folder: International Center Program – Ideas, SIA.

Moreover, the collaborative, multifaceted aims of the International Center would allow it to be "life-centered in its concerns, Institution-wide in its perspective, worldwide in its focus, and research and service oriented in its commitment."[562] Put simply, it would synthesize Ripley's plans for human ecology within the broader scope of cultural diplomacy. Through the permanent display of works of art in the Museum of African Art and the Freer-Sackler Galleries, the Quadrangle would also fulfill Lévi-Strauss's challenge to safeguard a record of those lifeways threatened by change—or at least a large percentage of them.

But what of the place of anthropology within natural history? As this chapter has shown, conversations about the proposed form and function of the Museum of Man were as influenced (if not more so) by the internal needs and departmental challenges of the Institution's anthropologists as they were by Ripley's quest for a museum-centered approach to human ecology. Although Sol Tax had been brought to the Smithsonian to resolve these tensions, his efforts to do so by connecting the intellectual and methodological focus of the Department with his aims to organize world anthropology proved too broad, both disciplinarily and geographically, to overcome the Institution's long tradition in museum anthropology. While a considerable portion of the limitations facing Tax's plans had to do with bureaucratic and financial obstacles from within the Institution, they also reflected changing understandings about what it meant to be a curator of anthropological collections. The policy-oriented tasks of the Center for the Study of Man extended too far beyond what could be achieved in the atmosphere of the museum.

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[562] "The International Center of the Quadrangle Center for African, Near Eastern, and Asian Cultures," circa 1983, Acc. 90-87, box 3, folder: Smithsonian International Center, SIA.

Similarly, too much focus on international problems ultimately negated the more manageable (and in some ways more immediate) task of processing and securing those collections already in need of maintenance within the Smithsonian. This idea of manageability perhaps explains the shift of geographic focus for the urgent anthropology program, which under the management of Ives Goddard in the late-1970s and early 1980s turned to the documentation of North American cultural forms and languages, particularly in the Arctic. In some ways, this brought the Smithsonian's commitment to ethnographic salvage full-circle, as this transition happened approximately a hundred years after J. W. Powell used the disappearance of America's Native American populations to justify the establishment of the Bureau of American Ethnology in 1879. The return in the Smithsonian's focus to the American continents, reinforced by planning for the 1976 Bicentennial, perhaps also partially explains the success of the *Handbook* project and the eventual construction of the National Museum of the American Indian at the expense of the other activities managed by the Center for the Study of Man. As I will discuss further in the next and final chapter, the creative limits of Smithsonian anthropology could only extend so far beyond its disciplinary and geographic boundaries. More experimental activities would therefore have to carve out a new meaning of what it meant to study the changing behaviors of human beings.

CHAPTER SIX

Documenting Human Nature:

E. Richard Sorenson and the National Anthropological Film Center, 1970-1981

> One of the great tragedies of our modern time may be that most of these independent experiments in living are disappearing before we can discover the implications of their special expressions of human possibility. Ironically, the same technology responsible for the worldwide cultural convergence has also provided the means by which we may capture detailed visual records of the yet remaining independent cultures…obviously, increasing our understanding of behavioral repertoire of humankind would strengthen our ability to improve life in the world.
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> —E. Richard Sorenson, "Growing Up as a Fore," 1977.[563]

Introduction

Throughout the bulk of this dissertation I mostly have focused on answering the central question of what, precisely, was *urgent* about urgent anthropology. I have not yet provided a concrete example of what this might have looked like in practice. How did proponents of urgent anthropology actually carry out their research? While the task forces organized by Tax through the Center for the Study of Man and the exhibits envisioned by Ripley for the Museum of Man might have offered one solution, as the last chapter showed, both of these concepts ultimately fell through. Yet one of the programs proposed for inclusion in the Center and Museum did manage to find some success in fulfilling the goals of urgent anthropology via the application of ethnographic film.

This chapter explores the use of film for urgent anthropology by focusing on the activities of the Smithsonian's National Anthropological Film Center (NAFC). Founded

[563] E. Richard Sorenson, "Growing up as a Fore is to be 'in touch' and free," *Smithsonian Magazine* (May 1977): 114.

in 1975, the Film Center grew out of half a century of discussions on film and its value for anthropology.[564] While moving picture cameras had been used to document and study human beings since the late-nineteenth century, difficult travel conditions, heavy equipment, and expensive, highly flammable film stock frequently discouraged anthropologists from incorporating film as part of their fieldwork.[565] Yet by the mid-twentieth century, many practitioners in fields across the physical and natural sciences embraced the investigative, evidentiary, and pedagogical applications of still and moving images for their work.[566] For anthropology, film also provided the ability to record, communicate, and study certain aspects of human behaviors, such as ritual or dance, which could not easily be conveyed through words alone.[567] By the 1960s, these methodological innovations, coupled with new advancements in film technology (particularly the production of faster, lighter-weight cameras and the addition of synchronous sound), helped make motion picture film an increasingly attractive means of conducting ethnographic research and an essential tool for the Smithsonian's program in urgent anthropology.

Thus under the leadership of its first director, filmmaker and photographer E. Richard Sorenson, the Film Center became the most successful of the Smithsonian's urgent anthropological programs and set out to document an ethnographic film sample of

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[564] For a concise history of film's use in anthropology, see Emilie De Brigard, "The History of Ethnographic Film," in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. Paul Hockings, 1st ed. (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1975), 13-44.
[565] On the history of motion picture film's technological improvements and its impact on anthropology, see Pamela Wintle, "Moving Image Technology and Archives," in *Recreating First Contact: Expeditions, Anthropology, and Popular Culture*, eds. Joshua A. Bell, Alison K. Brown, and Robert J. Gordon (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2013), 31-40.
[566] See, for example, the uses outlined in Anthony Michaelis, *Research Films in Biology, Anthropology, Psychology, and Medicine* (New York: Academic Press, Inc., 1955).
[567] Margaret Mead describes usage in her essay, "Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words," in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. Paul Hockings, 1st ed. (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1975), 3-12.

the world's cultures.[568] In keeping with the interdisciplinary model set by Ripley and Tax, Sorenson also worked to expand the utility of the Center by pushing it beyond a strictly anthropological database into a collection of film documents valuable to researchers working in disciplines including medicine, psychology, and ecology. In addition, he fostered collaboration with filmmakers in the international community, making film an important diplomatic tool among the world's leaders. In these ways, Sorenson's goals for the Film Center mirrored Ripley's aspirations for the Smithsonian and especially his greater plans for the proposed Museum of Man.

Despite its importance for urgent anthropological research, the activities of the NAFC are rarely discussed outside of scholarship on visual anthropology. Even within this literature, mention of the Film Center is brief and generally dismissive of the research film method advocated by Sorenson.[569] This treatment is surprising, as the emergence of the Film Center coincided with the official recognition of visual anthropology as a separate subdiscipline by the International Congress on Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES) in 1968, a decision largely prompted by the use of film for urgent anthropological research. Yet Sorenson's

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[568] John Homiak discusses this purpose in some detail, but ties it to the work of visual anthropologist Timothy Asch. Although Asch was involved with planning the Center, he had little to do with its daily operations. See John P. Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," in *Timothy Asch and Ethnographic Film*, ed. E. D. Lewis (New York: Routledge, 2004), 185-203.

[569] A notable example of this is found in the writings of visual anthropologist Jay Ruby. In an article on the professionalization of visual anthropology, Ruby only briefly mentions the activities of the National Anthropological Film Center, referring in passing to the "controversy" that led to Sorenson's replacement as director. See Jay Ruby, "The Professionalization of Visual Anthropology in the United States: The 1960s and 1970s," *Visual Anthropology Review* 17 (Fall-Winter 2000-2001): 8. Ruby has also written against the idea of research film, labeling it as positivistic and therefore contrary to the goals of anthropology: Jay Ruby, "Exposing Yourself: Reflexivity, Anthropology, and Film," *Semiotica* 30 (1980): 153-179. For this reason, Ruby criticizes the inclusion of Sorenson's essay on research film in the 1995 reprint of Paul Hockings's *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, noting that the appearance of the essay "gave the illusion that research film is still a viable idea among visual anthropologists. It is not." (as printed in Jay Ruby, *Picturing Culture: Explorations of Film & Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 283).

commitment to the interdisciplinary potential of objective cinema records put him at odds with contemporary filmmakers who wanted the Film Center to house films which more closely reflected the interests of anthropology. In reaction to the social and political struggles of the 1960s and '70s, cultural anthropologists and filmmakers like Jay Ruby, Timothy Asch, and Jean Rouch sought to use their perspective on human societies to confront what they saw as the global inequalities of the period. They believed that in order to most adequately address these concerns, anthropologists needed to adopt a reflexive stance by becoming more self-conscious of their cultural biases as they appeared in a final text or film.[570] As a result, most histories of visual anthropology have promulgated a single narrative focusing on the contributions of early film pioneers and of those filmmakers who used film as a kind of cultural communication between the filmmaker and the subject.

Anthropologist Fadwa El Guindi, however, suggests that visual anthropology actually has two distinct genealogies: one with a foundation in a scientific research-based or ethnographic method, and one recognizing a cinematic or documentary style more commonly associated with visual anthropology.[571] Although Sorenson's method fits neatly into this first genealogy, his contributions to visual anthropology and the importance of film for urgent anthropological research have been largely ignored by the literature. One objective of this chapter is to show that the development of visual

[570] Most histories of anthropology differentiate between two reflexive turns in anthropology: one in the late 1960s and early 1970s characterized by Clifford Geertz's concept of "thick description" and a later, post-modern approach to reflexivity discussed by James Clifford and George Marcus. See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973), James Clifford and George E. Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). For the purpose of this paper, I am using Geertz's definition of reflexivity, where the study of another culture is treated as an act of interpretation and not as pure science.

[571] Fadwa El Guindi, *Visual Anthropology: Essential Method and Theory* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltraMira Press, 2004), 82.

anthropology as an independent subdiscipline is actually inextricably linked to the history of urgent anthropology and that Sorenson's research film method needs to be recuperated as a part of a larger discourse on the use of film taking place during the period. Addressing Sorenson's work on research film thus contributes to earlier discussions in this dissertation about the challenges confronting the disciplinary identity of anthropology following the war, and attempts to reconcile new methodologies (in this case the use of film records) with established scientific theories and practices.

A second objective of this chapter is to use the Film Center's position within the Smithsonian to explore conflicts caused by the inclusion of a large-scale, interdisciplinary research program in a traditional museum setting. Although primarily linked to the discipline of anthropology, the activities of the Film Center covered topics of interest to researchers in the sciences as well as the humanities. As a result, the Film Center became regarded as an innovative way to understand human behaviors, a sentiment reinforced by its contributions to urgent anthropological research and its initial inclusion as part of Ripley's ecologically oriented Center for the Study of Man and proposed Museum of Man. Yet because a permanent structure for the Museum of Man was never built, the Film Center was forced into the organizational umbrella of the National Museum of Natural History and the Department of Anthropology described in chapter 5. This decision led to disciplinary ambiguities and administrative conflicts within the Smithsonian that ultimately jeopardized the Center's ability to make films. An examination of the changing relationship of the National Anthropological Film Center as part of the activities of the Smithsonian is thus important for understanding the role museums play in both facilitating and limiting new methods of scientific research.

Finally, highlighting the Film Center's role in carrying out global, urgent anthropological research speaks to questions about the purpose of archives for the postwar human sciences. This in turn validates urgent anthropology's placement alongside other large-scale research projects such as the International Geophysical Year and the International Biological Program.[572] Despite the Film Center's eventual dissolution in the early 1980s, most of the film documents made under Sorenson's direction still remain, now as part of the eight million feet of film housed at the Smithsonian's Human Studies Film Archives. Thinking about the original motivations for accumulating these records as part of Ripley's larger plans to bridge perspectives in the anthropological and environmental science and their continued use at the Smithsonian Institution suggests a need to evaluate the significance of the archive as the lasting legacy of urgent anthropology.

By focusing on the history of the National Anthropological Film Center and the non-anthropological objectives of its director, this chapter seeks to broaden the understanding of film use in the study of human beings beyond anthropology to larger applications pertinent to the environmental and behavioral sciences. In doing so, it strives to problematize the history of visual anthropology by emphasizing the interdisciplinary potential afforded by Sorenson's research film method while highlighting its similarities to Ripley's larger plans for the Smithsonian. It begins by situating the Film Center as an outgrowth of early efforts to establish an anthropological film archive at the Smithsonian for both research and teaching purposes. It then considers the application of film beyond

[572] See Elena Aronova, Karen S, Baker, and Naomi Oreskes, "Big Science and Big Data in Biology: from the International Geophysical Year through the International Biological Program to the Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) Network, 1957-present," *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 40 (2010): 183-224.

anthropology by focusing on E. Richard Sorenson, his research film methodology, and his appropriation of urgent anthropology as a primary justification for interdisciplinary film research. Finally, through a reconstruction of the Film Center's contentious relationship with Smithsonian administration and its uncertain ties to anthropology, this chapter shows how different groups of scientists and thinkers sought to use new technological innovations to help confront the reality of disappearing cultures in a rapidly changing postwar world.

Planning a Film Archive at the Smithsonian Institution

Beginning in the mid-1960s, organizations like the American Anthropological Association (AAA) and the Wenner-Gren Foundation hosted several conferences devoted to discussions about the use of film in anthropology. During this time, ethnographic films were viewed as most valuable for teaching purposes, since they could visually communicate some of the major themes of the discipline. Until this point, films had mostly been used as aids or supplements to written texts, so films assembled for educational purpose seemed a natural extension of this earlier tradition. However, a number of anthropologists argued that film had another function as a way to record lifeways of disappearing cultures. For example, a summary of an AAA conference held in 1965 on the uses of film for teaching noted that despite the conference's focus on the pedagogical uses of film, most of the conference was spent discussing the "urgent need to carry out technically competent, multi-purpose visual and sound recordings of surviving

cultures in imminent danger of extinction."[573] Many of the attendees felt that whereas large, unedited quantities of film could be "adapted for teaching uses," the reverse (the assemblage of unedited research film from edited education films) was not possible.[574] The filming of disappearing cultures should therefore be given priority. By 1968, film's important application for ethnographic salvage was officially recognized by the Eighth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences with the inclusion of filming projects as a central concern of the newly-formed committee on urgent anthropology.[575] Since film documents for urgent research ultimately needed to be stored somewhere for easy access and preservation, conversations soon shifted to the construction of a film archive. Both the Wenner-Gren Foundation and the AAA acknowledged that because of its historic role in the collection of documents on vanishing cultures, the Smithsonian Institution was the obvious place to host such an archive.

Fortunately, members of the Smithsonian's Office of Anthropology had already been thinking about a film archive as part of the planning for the Center for the Study of Man and Museum of Man. Led by Curator of African Ethnology Gordon Gibson, they argued that a film archive was a crucial addition to these activities. First, they believed film could be used to record certain kinds of data on vanishing cultures not easily documented in written accounts. Such data included indigenous technological processes, subtle human interactions, and elaborate ceremonies, among others.[576] A film archive that

[573] "Conference to discuss the uses of film in teaching anthropology, held at Watertown, Massachusetts, May 8-9, 1965," Gordon Gibson Papers, box 126, folder: film correspondence with Sol Tax, National Anthropological Archives (NAA).
[574] Ibid.
[575] Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 188.
[576] Gordon Gibson to Sol Tax, March 15,1966, Gibson Papers, box 125, folder: Film Correspondence with Sol Tax, NAA.

promoted the collection of visual data from societies undergoing change thus fitted seamlessly into the pre-existing activities of the Smithsonian's 1966 urgent anthropology program. Gibson, along with Sol Tax, similarly considered a film component a "natural complement to the activities of the SOA Archives, the most comprehensive collection of still photographs and manuscript materials on the American Indian in existence."[577] Second, the creation of a film archive also appealed to the broader environmental focus of the Center. Assistant Secretary for Science Sidney Galler called the potential of such an archive "tremendous," noting that the same philosophy used in recording the activities of disappearing cultures would be "equally valid with respect to motion picture records of other phenomena (e.g. animal behavior) that are difficult and costly to capture on films, or that are subject to long-term fluctuations (e.g. ecological complexes)."[578] Finally, the archive could also be used for educational purposes, since, as suggested at AAA, any archival footage could later be assembled into ethnographic films appropriate for classroom use. Director of the Smithsonian's Seminars and Symposia series, Matthew Huxley, stressed this point, echoing the sentiments of curriculum reformers interested in funding ethnographic film projects.[579] For them, anthropological films provided an accessible introduction to the rapidly growing social sciences. "The New Math, the New Physics, the New Biology," Huxley wrote, "are already in today's classrooms while tomorrow's New Social Sciences are being developed today. With TV

[577] Gordon Gibson and Sol Tax to Dillon Ripley, "The Proposed Anthropological Motion Picture Archive," April 24, 1968, National Anthropological Film Center (NAFC) Papers, box 3, folder: April 1968-Dec. 1976, Human Studies Film Archives (HSFA).
[578] Sidney Galler to Gordon Gibson, "The Proposed 'Archive for the Recording of Changing Environments,'" June 19, 1967, Gibson Papers, box 125, folder: Gordon Gibson – Sorenson Proposal – Archive for Recording Changing Environments, NAA.
[579] For more on the development of anthropological film for teaching, see Erika Milam, "Public Science in the Savage Mind: Contesting Cultural Anthropology in the Cold War Classroom," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 49 (Summer 2013): 306-330.

giving us instantaneous entrée to all the world's events, so that our whole earth becomes a 'global village' to be displayed before the student's eyes, it is easy to understand why anthropology is coming to be the conceptual cornerstone of the new social studies curriculum."[580]

Despite the push in the anthropological community towards using film for research, by the end of the 1960s, most funding for ethnographic films still came from agencies interested in curriculum reform. As a result, funding agencies like the National Science Foundation (NSF) were receiving more proposals for film projects than they could possibly grant. After receiving an application from filmmaker Timothy Asch, Leo Baggerly of the Foundation's Science Curriculum Improvement Program (SCIP) responded that while the proposal was "fine," there was too much confusion within the NSF about how to respond to the large number of requests. Asch later recalled Baggerly's comments on the lack of organization within the emerging field of visual anthropology and the need for a conference to "give some meaning and structure to what seems to be a perfectly legitimate field of inquiry within anthropology."[581] Facing this dilemma, Asch approached Gibson, who agreed to meet representatives of the SCIP, including Baggerly and John Snyder, to discuss ways to prioritize film requests. One of the major issues raised by Baggerly was that anthropologists, not NSF staff, needed to establish priorities for ethnographic films.[582] Despite a general recognition of the importance of films for research and education, the objectives of visual anthropology

[580] Matthew Huxley and Marjorie Halpin, "Proposal to the Wenner-Gren Foundation for a National Ethno-Film Center," March 1968, Gordon Gibson Papers, box 125, folder: Huxley-Halpin Film Proposal, NAA.
[581] As quoted in Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 191.
[582] Diary Note, National Science Foundation, "Meeting with Dr. Gordon D. Gibson, Curator of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560," July 15, 1970, Gibson Papers, box 126, folder: Belmont Conf. Proposal and Acceptance, NAA.

remained undefined, meaning there was little consensus on how exactly ethnographic films should be filmed and constructed. As a result, Baggerly and members of the NSF were faced with the difficult challenge of weeding out proposals for films representing an unmanageable number of methods and perspectives. Baggerly urged Gibson to organize a conference where participants could finally debate the needs and opportunities of the new subdiscipline. He argued that with the establishment of such a consensus, increased budgets for anthropological films could be made available. He also suggested that the conference "might well provide a useful basis for the establishment of an ethnographic archive at the Smithsonian or elsewhere."[583]

Although Gibson was uncertain as to whether or not a consensus on the needs of ethnographic film could be reached among such a diverse group of filmmakers, he agreed to organize the conference. With the help of Jay Ruby, Secretary of the Program in Ethnographic Film (PIEF), Gibson submitted a proposal to the NSF to sponsor a three-day conference designed to formulate "practicable guidelines for the endorsement of film projects submitted to the Science Curriculum Improvement Program for funding."[584] The conference would also assess requirements for films used in teaching anthropology and consider plans to develop an anthropological film archive to generate new research footage and house existing films.[585] Along with the National Science Foundation and PIEF, the Smithsonian also sponsored the conference thanks in large part to Gibson's affiliation and its prior identification as the natural home for a film archive.

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[583] Ibid.
[584] Gordon Gibson to John Snyder, September 11, 1970, Gibson Papers, box 126, folder: Belmont Conference Correspondences, NAA.
[585] Ibid. Incidentally, at the time these discussions were taking place, both Margaret Mead and John Marshall were looking for a permanent place to store their film records since, other than Gajdusek's archive at the NIH, no archive existed.

Held in October 1970, the Belmont Conference (named after the Smithsonian's conference facility in Elkridge, Maryland) was attended by approximately thirty participants representing interests in anthropology and film.[586] Keeping to the agenda laid out by Gibson and Ruby's proposal, the conference featured seven sessions, which included such topics as the standards for the acceptance of film, services which the archive should provide, and criteria for funding film projects. To facilitate discussions, participants were asked to prepare position papers in advance outlining their views on these topics. As predicted by Gibson, opinions were diverse and often divisive. The session on standards governing the acceptance of film was particularly problematic and foreshadowed the disagreements that would continue to challenge the activities of the archive in the future.

These disagreements largely centered around the question of whether or not film should be used strictly as a means for recording information or if the proposed archive should support more innovative uses. Encouraged by film's application as a tool for communication, some of the participants, including Jay Ruby and Sol Worth, had come to see film as a kind of cultural document reflecting the interests and practices of cultures under study. In order to avoid misrepresenting events, they argued that these kinds of films required extensive understanding of the culture being filmed, knowledge that could only be attained with university training in anthropology.[587] Others, like John Marshall, contended that the archive should not be restricted to "strictly anthropological or ethnographic projects," and suggested that films of "sociological importance, of urbanization, of psychological significance, and of animal behavior" would enhance the

[586] The conference included such scholars as Margaret Mead, John Marshall, Jay Ruby, Raymond Birdwhistell, Asen Balikci, Alan Lomax, Karl Heider, Timothy Asch, and Richard Sorenson, among others.
[587] Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 192.

collections of the archive.[588] Still others, like Alan Lomax, expressed impatience with the group's preoccupation with requirements, pointing to the urgency of filming disappearing cultures and the benefits of learning how to evaluate pre-existing footage. In a letter to SCIP member John Snyder, Lomax wrote that "…motion pictures of human behavior are layer-cakes of structured communication patterns, there is ethnographic data of some sort in all documentary footage…"[589] For Lomax, what mattered more than standards of filmmaking was the establishment of an archive that could properly preserve audio and film for cross-cultural study.[590]

In the end, the conferees agreed that what was most important was the creation of a "world ethnographic film sample" containing film documents useful for research as well as teaching.[591] Adopting the position proposed by Margaret Mead, they decided that the standards for film would remain flexible in order to mirror the changing nature of anthropological theory and practice.[592] However, they also agreed that films made for teaching purposes should, "at least partially" address the "various research needs and different audiences that exist in anthropology," meaning they needed to be made with some understanding of the discipline.[593] In addition to these methodological decisions, the attendees reached three important agreements affecting the future administration of the archive. First, the Smithsonian Institution would serve as the institutional home for

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[588] John. K Marshall, "Services the Archive Should Provide," October 19, 1970, NAFC Papers, box 1, folder: Belmont Conference Papers [2 of 2], HSFA.
[589] Alan Lomax to Richard Lieben, August 15, 1970, NAFC Papers, box 1, folder: Belmont Conference Papers [2 of 2], HSFA.
[590] For more on Lomax's philosophy on archives and film, see Alan Lomax, "Cinema, Science, and Culture Renewal," *Current Anthropology* 14 (Oct. 1973): 474-480.
[591] Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 192.
[592] Margaret Mead, "Scope of the Proposed Archive: Introductory position paper," October 30, 1970. NAFC Papers, box 1, folder: Belmont Conference Papers [2 of 2], HSFA.
[593] "Belmont Summary Reports," NAFC Papers, box 1, folder: Belmont Conference [1 of 2], HSFA, Gordon Gibson, "Report to the National Science Foundation: A Working Conference on Anthropological Film," Gibson Papers, box 126, folder: NSF Proposal, NAA.

the film archive while it gained its financial footing. Although initial startup funds would be provided by outside grants, representatives from the Smithsonian planned to include the archive as a line item within the Institution's budget so that it could receive Congressional funds in the future. Second, to ensure that the direction of the archive would reflect the concerns of the Belmont attendees and the future of visual anthropology, they established the Anthropological Research Film Institute (AFRI) to serve as a liaison between the archive and the Smithsonian. Its advisory board, composed of scholars knowledgeable in anthropology and film, would raise money and monitor the archive's activities. Finally, with location and infrastructure in place, the participants agreed that AFRI was responsible for selecting the archive's director.[594]

Because of her status as a prominent cultural anthropologist and her experience with using film, Margaret Mead was chosen as president of AFRI. Mead had long advocated the use of visual techniques in anthropology, beginning with her work with Gregory Bateson in Bali. Mead and Bateson sought to use the camera as a way to interact with their subjects, preferring an "interrogatory rather than an illustrative" approach to film.[595] Instead of using film to supplement written materials, as had become custom, Bateson and Mead treated film as a text in itself. This was particularly useful for their investigations of cultural practices that could not adequately be described using words, such as dance. According to Mead, a movie camera could be used to create "running field notes" of events in place of written observations.[596] These observations could then be annotated with time, place, and event, making it relatively easy to compare similar

[594] Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 192.
[595] Anna Grimshaw, "Visual anthropology," in *A New History of Anthropology*, ed. Henrika Kuklick (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008), 301.
[596] Ira Jacknis, "Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson in Bali: their use of photography and film," *Cultural Anthropology* 3 (May 1988): 163.

sequences across cultures. In addition to aiding cross-cultural research, Mead was early to recognize film's potential for creating objective, visual records of disappearing cultures. It is likely that this position was influenced by the salvage efforts of her academic mentor, Franz Boas, who had also used film and photography to record the cultural behaviors of tribes living on the Northwest Coast.[597] As the general narrative of the history of visual anthropology suggests, Mead's work in Bali marks an important turning point in the use of film for anthropological research.[598] At the same time, it also fundamentally linked cinematic applications within the discipline to a "salvage paradigm" that promoted film's use for documenting so-called vanishing cultures.[599] As the "mother of visual anthropology," it is little surprise that Mead had a strong influence on the direction of the activities of the future National Anthropological Archive and on the selection of its director.

With Mead's guidance, AFRI elected E. Richard Sorenson as director, based on his success in establishing a functional film archive at the National Institutes of Health, as well as on his development of a research film method. Since the Belmont conferees had failed to choose a single film method to build the archive's holding, AFRI suggested that the director should promote filming "in a style which permitted a multitude of uses for both educational and research purposes."[600] As had been determined at earlier meetings on film use, research film tended to be more adaptable to the various needs of the discipline. In addition, AFRI acknowledged that the initial job of the director should be

[597] Rosalind Morris discusses Franz Boas' reliance on film and photography in his salvage work among the Kwakiutl. See Rosalind C. Morris, *New Worlds from Fragments: Film, Ethnography, and the Representation of Northwest Coast Cultures* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 55-66.
[598] Ruby, "The Professionalization of Visual Anthropology," 6.
[599] Grimshaw, "Visual Anthropology," 301. For more on the relationship between ethnographic salvage and innovations in recording technologies, see Brian Hochman, *Savage Preservation: The Ethnographic Origins of Modern Media Technology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).
[600] "Belmont Summary Reports," NAFC Papers, box 1, folder: Belmont Conference [1 of 2], HSFA.

"focused more on scientific and creative duties than on administrative tasks" so as to promote the salvage agenda of the archive.[601] Again, a primarily scientific direction for the center through the use of film research would allow the center to "develop most flexibly to better take advantage of new findings and fill new needs."[602] With a need for both a "visual reference librarian" and a "thinker-scholar-organizer," the committee felt Sorenson was the best choice for steering the research and archival objectives required of the new anthropological film archive.[603] Yet while Sorenson would later receive a Ph.D. in anthropology, he considered the true value of film to extend well beyond the discipline, and argued it could serve as an objective record useful to researchers in many different fields, including medical research, child behavior, psychology, and ecology. More importantly, his interdisciplinary approach mirrored Ripley's views on urgent anthropology, making his research film method a nice counterpoint to the programs of the expanded Center for the Study of Man.

Urgent Footage: Developing a Research Film Method

Sorenson began work on his research film method in 1963 alongside Carleton Gajdusek of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). At the time, the focus of Gajdusek's work was on the spread of *kuru*, a degenerative brain disease endemic to the Fore region of Papua New Guinea, whose inhabitants were later found to have contracted it as a result of ritual cannibalism.[604] Gajdusek, who had been filming in the region since 1957,

[601] Job Description, Director of the National Film Study Center and Archive, Gibson Papers, box 127, folder: Belmont Conf- Substantive Matters, NAA.
[602] Ibid.
[603] "Belmont Summary Reports," NAFC Papers, box 1, folder: Belmont Conference [1 of 2], HSFA.
[604] D. Carleton Gajdusek and V. Zigas, "Degenerative Disease of the Central Nervous System in New Guinea: the endemic occurrence of 'Kuru' in the native population," *The New England Journal of Medicine* 257 (1957): 974-978.

justified the use of motion picture cameras to create cinema records that could then be studied retrospectively in order to help isolate the different stages of the disease in patients.[605] This served as a particularly useful diagnostic tool in the case of *kuru*, since victims exhibited an indefinite latency period prior to showing the first signs of the disease. Gajdusek used the film gathered by Sorenson and other cinematographers as a way to monitor and record subtle changes in behavior over time, making possible the observation of physical cues, for example tremors and muscle weakness, as the disease attacked the body's nervous system.

Sorenson and Gajdusek soon expanded the method they had used to identify the subtle manifestation of *kuru* symptoms to observe other kinds of behaviors. Thinking in terms of the fleeting appearance of certain physical expressions displayed by children during the early stages of their neurological development, they characterized such instances as "non-recurring phenomena."[606] These events were described as non-recurring since they represented moments that could not be reproduced in a laboratory setting or witnessed again in nature.[607] However, they argued that by filming a culture or event over a period of time, it was possible to create unedited "research film documents" that could then be re-watched multiple times, allowing the viewer to retrospectively analyze captured footage.[608] These documents, when gathered into an accessible and reliable database, could be preserved and later retrieved, allowing the investigator to "re-create, in part at least, the lost phenomenon."[609] Sorenson and Gajdusek compared the

[605] D. C. Gajdusek, E. R. Sorenson, and Judith Meyer, "A comprehensive cinema record of disappearing kuru," *Brain* 93 (1970): 65-76.
[606] E. R. Sorenson and D.C. Gajdusek, "Investigation of Non-recurring Phenomena: The Research Cinema Film," *Nature* 200 (Oct. 1963): 112.
[607] Sorenson and Gajdusek, "Investigation of Non-recurring Phenomena," 112.
[608] Ibid.
[609] Ibid.

assemblage of film documents to other rare accumulated records intended for retrospective scientific analysis, such as the frozen storage of blood serum for future investigations in human genetics.[610] With the help of sophisticated viewing equipment, the viewer could manipulate filmed footage by adjusting its speed and dissecting it into individual frames to be scrutinized at leisure and mined for data. Sorenson argued that since film was created by means of "objective chemical changes in a light-sensitive emulsion," all footage contained undifferentiated information that could be used for future research—including investigations in areas beyond the film's original purpose.[611] Because all film held potentially valuable data, Sorenson felt that the major concern for filmmakers was no longer what footage should be kept for the final cut, but instead how all the footage could be made most useful and accessible.

Before he could answer this question, Sorenson first had to justify the use of film for scientific research. Despite its increased use in the field, he believed that the full potential of film for research use had never been fully realized, due in large part to the impact of the motion picture industry and the continued use of film as a teaching aid in the classroom.[612] He contradicted the idea that films only had entertainment and pedagogical value by highlighting the long history of the camera's use as an objective scientific instrument, beginning with Étienne-Jules Marey's invention of the cinema camera for his work on motion studies in the 1880s and continuing with Ray

[610] Here Sorenson and Gajdusek are referring to the collection of blood by human geneticists and biological anthropologists as part of the Human Adaptability arm of the International Biological Program. Gajdusek was one of the researches involved in the collection of human tissue from primitive cultures believed to contain important biological information about human evolution and disease. See Joanna Radin, "Life on Ice: Frozen Blood and Biological Variation in a Genomic Age, 1950-2010," (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2012).
[611] E. Richard Sorenson, "A Research Film Program in the Study of Changing Man," *Current Anthropology* 8 (Dec. 1967): 446.
[612] Sorenson, "A Research Film Program in the Study of Changing Man," 442.

Birdwhistell's investigations of human kinesics in the 1950s.[613] Sorenson posited two reasons why research cinema had not gained more momentum within the scientific community in spite of its long history: first, there had been no proper place to store cinematic documents which, unlike paper or even photographic documents, required more carefully controlled storage conditions, and second, that filmmakers lacked a standard method for constructing research films, making it difficult to subject them to rigorous academic review.

The solution, it seemed, was the acceptance of a research film method that standardized the assemblage of film documents and the creation of a film archive where footage could then be managed and stored. Sorenson had already begun work on both of these aspects through the processing of Gajdusek's *kuru* footage at the NIH. Using Gajdusek's archive as a model, Sorenson outlined a strategy for the assembly of research films. After the filmmaker identified the subject of the film, footage would be organized chronologically and annotated with time, place, and a description of the event shown. The film processor would then create a "work print" by making a copy of the original film. So as to preserve the quality of the initial footage, all original film would be placed in a vault for permanent storage. Any footage determined useless, for example places with no image or audio, would be cut from the work print while remaining untouched in the original film. Afterwards, work prints could be further edited through the inclusion of title cards describing events in more detail. Following these edits, a magnetic stripe containing a sound track could be added to the film and then converted into a "projection print" for easy viewing. Final projection prints would be deposited in an accessible film library along with any field notes or logbooks associated with the footage. The partially

[613] Sorenson, "A Research Film Program in the Study of Changing Man," 443.

edited work prints would be stored in a separate archive where they could be accessed for subsequent film production (Figure 6.1).[614]

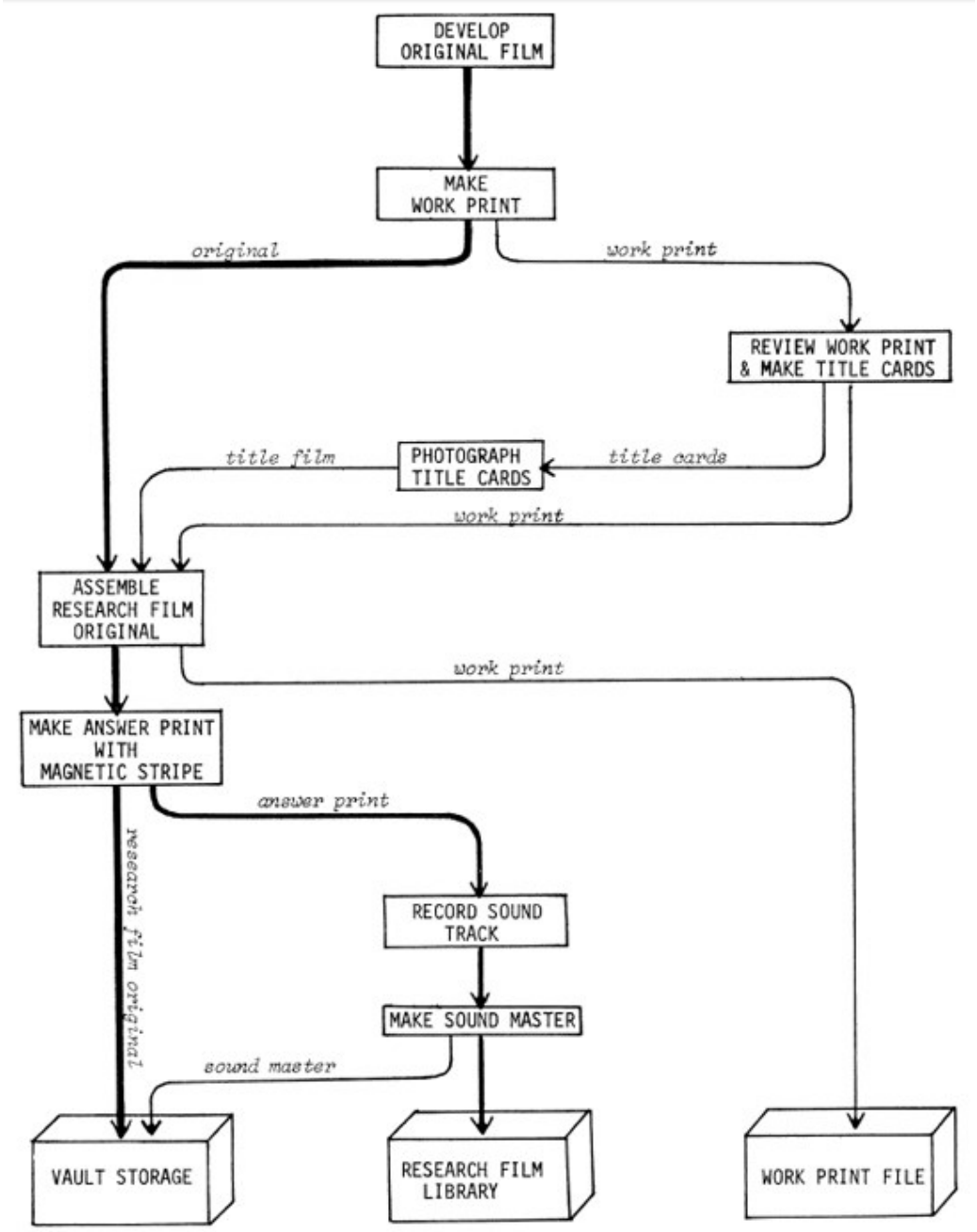

Figure 6.1. The research film method. E. Richard Sorenson, "A Research Film Program in the Study of Changing Man," *Current Anthropology* 8 (Dec. 1967): 447.

[614] This paragraph summarizes the description of the research film method found in Sorenson, "A Research Film Program in the Study of Changing Man," 446-449.

Through this method, Sorenson sought to alleviate concerns about the legitimacy of film as a scientific document while also providing a functional repository for researchers seeking to use and store such fragile data. For him, it was evident that research film and a research film archive must develop together in order for the camera to serve as a valid scientific instrument. With both components in place, the scope of film research was almost limitless, so long as the footage was carefully annotated and properly stored.

The establishment of a research film archive had another value as well. Like Margaret Mead, Sorenson found that cataloging original footage and film prints had the benefit of preserving not only useful scientific data, but also a record of cultures on the verge of extinction. Beginning with his work with Gajdusek among the Fore, Sorenson became interested in how footage of relatively isolated tribes could be used to answer larger questions about human behavior and the relationship of humans with their environment. He argued that film of cultural isolates had the capacity to serve as "windows into the past," through which future viewers could glean information about societies undergoing change.[615] Film could also act as "mirrors of culture," allowing the filmmaker to use the footage to reflect certain ideas and values that resonated between the culture of study and the culture of the viewer.[616] Simultaneously, the same footage could

[615] E. Richard Sorenson, "Anthropological Film: A Scientific and Humanistic Resource," *Science* 186 (Dec. 1974): 1080. Although he does not use the term "primitive society," Sorenson's use of the term "windows on the past" does bring to mind the old tradition in anthropology of treating supposedly "primitive" cultures as being frozen in time. In evolutionary terms, these "stone age societies" represented the beginning in the linear progression to civilization. For example, see Stanley Diamond, *In Search of the Primitive: A Critique of Civilization* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1974), Adam Kuper, *The Reinvention of Primitive Society: Transformation of a Myth* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

[616] Sorenson, "Anthropological Film," 1080. This idea also builds on an older literature, most notably Clyde Kluckhohn's 1950 *Mirror for Man.* Written as a response to the atrocities of World War II, Kluckhohn's book argues that anthropology must use the study of past societies to help find solutions to the social and scientific problems of the future. Incidentally, Claude Lévi-Strauss used the same image of the mirror in his 1965 speech at the Smithsonian. See Clyde Kluckhohn, *Mirror for Man: The Relation of Anthropology to Modern Life* (London: George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1950), Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Anthropology: Its Achievements and Future," *Current Anthropology* 7 (April 1966): 124-127.

be used to investigate human response to changes taking place within the physical environment. In a proposal submitted to the Smithsonian during the early planning stages for the anthropological film archive, Sorenson explicitly indicated that research film on changing cultures also provided important information about changing environmental systems. As a result, footage collected under the guise of urgent anthropology was just as useful to anthropologists as it was to biologists and ecologists, a viewpoint he shared with Smithsonian Secretary S. Dillon Ripley.[617] Sorenson believed that film's ability to reveal different perspectives on human behavior and environmental adaptation meant that it needed to be treated as both a "scientific and humanistic" resource that could be applied broadly to all research on human beings. In turn, he felt that anthropology, as the discipline dedicated to the overall study of humankind, ought to expand its theoretical boundaries to include perspectives relevant to the humanities as well as the natural sciences.

Throughout the 1970s, Sorenson continued to explore the possibilities of film as a scientific and humanistic resource in his study of cultural isolates. Beginning with his work among the Fore, Sorenson became drawn to isolated communities characterized by what he saw as an "intuitive group rapport" not found in Western societies.[618] These "preconquest" societies (as he later called them), possessed a "liminal consciousness" not found in modern society. In effect, Sorenson was engaged in a kind of cognitive archaeology that focused on unearthing the remnants of a Neolithic consciousness supposedly predating modern human civilization. Borrowing from Freud's concepts of

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[617] E. Richard Sorenson, "That an archive for the recording of changing environments be established at the Smithsonian Institution," June 10, 1967, Gibson Papers, box 125, folder: The Proposed 'Archive for the Recording of Changing Environments,'" NAA.
[618] E. Richard Sorenson, "Preconquest Consciousness," in *Tribal Epistemologies: Essays in Philosophy and Anthropology*, ed. Helmut Wautischer (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 1998), 80.

subliminal and liminal awareness, Sorenson later defined liminal consciousness as an open and direct form of awareness concentrated on "at-the-moment, point-blank sensory experiences" which were in turn "unmanageable by rules of syntax and formal logic."[619] Such awareness was the opposite of the structured "supraliminal consciousness" characteristic of Western societies dependent on rules and formal cognitive categories.[620] Because liminal awareness existed on the "threshold of consciousness," Sorenson found that it could be observed most easily through the sensory, non-verbal interactions of young children with their social and natural surroundings.[621] For example, he observed that in cultures like the Fore, infants were kept in continued contact with the bodies of their mothers or close relations.[622] This was true even during periods of heavy work or food preparation, which allowed a child the ability to nurse upon impulse and aided the child's development of tactile forms of communication.[623] As children grew older, tactile communication developed into "sensual play," where expressions of friendship or approval were shown through caressing, hugging, kissing, etc. These episodes of nonverbal interactions in turn aided the formation of an intuitive and collaborative group dynamic that made the need for structured communication, such as written language, unnecessary.

Since Sorenson's research concentrated on these kinds of non-verbal and non-recurring modes of communication, film became the primary means for collecting and providing evidence. Following the model set by Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson in

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[619] E. Richard Sorenson, "Sensuality and Consciousness IV: Where did the liminal flowers go?: the study of child behavior and development in cultural isolates," *Anthropology of Consciousness* 7 (Dec. 1996): 9.
[620] Sorenson, "Where did the Liminal Flowers go?" 9, Sorenson, "Preconquest Consciousness," 83.
[621] Sorenson, "Preconquest Consciousness,"82.
[622] Sorenson, "Preconquest Consciousness," 83.
[623] Sorenson, "Where did the Liminal Flowers Go?" 14.

their 1942 book, *Balinese Character*, Sorenson adapted the use of screen stills and photographic sequences in his publications to demonstrate the discrete elements that characterized specific behavioral patterns (Figure 6.2). By grouping together sequences of similar types of behaviors exhibited in different cultural groups—for example, instances of nursing or exploratory play—Sorenson suggested that images could be used for cross-cultural comparisons highlighting different kinds expressions of behavior from around the world.[624]

Figure 6.2. A Fore child at play. E. Richard Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest*, *The Edge of the Forest* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976), 169.

[624] E. Richard Sorenson and D. Carleton Gajdusek, "Advantages and Methods for the Study of Childhood in Primitive Societies," *Pediatrics* 37 (January 1966): 156-157.

Sorenson most thoroughly explored the different analytical facets of this technique in his 1976 monograph, *The Edge of the Forest*.[625] In it, he relied on photographs and film sequences to demonstrate how the introduction of the sweet potato two hundred years prior had come to alter the physical and cultural landscape of the region through a chain of "interdependent ecological, demographic, and social developments" that transformed the lifestyle of the Fore people and their environment.[626] According to him, the introduction of the sweet potato to the northernmost parts of the New Guinea Highlands resulted in the creation of an agricultural society heavily reliant on the cultivation of garden plots. The relative ease of growing the sweet potato in the region led to an abundance of food, which in turn resulted in an increase in population. To accommodate larger numbers, the Fore began to expand the size and reach of their traditionally small garden plots, slowly encroaching on untouched areas of rainforest. As communities continued to grow, the slash-and-burn habitation patterns of the Northern Fore put pressures on the land, leaving visible signs of deforestation in the New Guinea Highlands characterized by patches of grassland where gardens once stood (Figures 6.3 & 6.4).[627] In some areas, bamboo thickets took the place of burned gardens, further disrupting the flora and fauna of the region.[628]

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[625] E. Richard Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest: Land, Childhood and Change in a New Guinea Protoagricultural Society* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976).
[626] Sorenson, *Edge of the* Forest, 349. Sorenson's approach to the study of the Fore within their environment mirrors approaches in cultural ecology. For example, see June Helm, "The Ecological Approach in Anthropology," 67 (May 1962): 630-639, and John W. Bennett, *The Ecological Transition: Cultural Anthropology and Human Adaption* (New York: Pergamon Press, Inc., 1976).
[627] E. Richard Sorenson, "Socio-Ecological Change among the Fore of New Guinea," *Current Anthropology* 13 (June-October 1972): 354; Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest*, 82.
[628] Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest*, 88.

Figures 6.3 & 6.4. Ecological encroachment in the New Guinea Highlands. E. Richard Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976), 24, 82.

The push into new territories also forced the Fore into contact with neighboring tribes, making warfare more common.[629] In an effort to gain greater security through numbers, certain Fore families in the north banded together, creating the need for formalized kinship groups that had not existed previously.[630] Through these types of organization, Sorenson noticed that the Northern Fore began to show behaviors suggesting the onset of a supraliminal consciousness. He commented on how the imposition of these structures, further aggravated by frequent contact with Australian officials following the 1950s, had made the population more suspicious and more likely to exhibit signs of aggression towards outsiders.[631]

Sorenson's observations of the supraliminal consciousness emerging in the northern areas of the New Guinea Highlands were further supported by the behaviors he found in the south. Thanks to the impenetrable conditions of the rainforest, the southern region had remained largely isolated. As a result, the Southern Fore had maintained an eagerness and collaborative mentality he had not seen in the north. Only with the introduction of Australian officials in the 1950s did the southern-most portions of the Fore region begin to show the signs of agricultural and social change that had already taken place elsewhere. Whereas the north had already developed an agricultural society, the south was just beginning to exhibit signs of what Sorenson called "protoagricultural" behavior. In a sense, the southern regions of the New Guinea Highlands became a kind of

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[629] Several anthropologists have written about the occurrence of warfare in the New Guinea Highlands and the customary practice of holding pig feasts as a way to maintain the peace. The best of these is Roy Rappaport's 1967 work, *Pigs for the Ancestors*, which ties the cycle of warfare and pig feasts to the ecological system of the region. See Roy A. Rappaport, *Pigs for the Ancestors: Ritual in the Ecology of a New Guinea People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972). Like Sorenson, Robert Gardner and Karl Heider also used a visual approach to study the agricultural activities of the Highlands. See Robert Gardner and Karl Heider, *Gardens of War: Live and Death in the New Guinea Stone* Age (New York: Random House, 1968).

[630] Sorenson, "Where did the Liminal Flowers Go?" 12.

[631] Ibid.

social and ecological laboratory where Sorenson could observe first hand the changes that had already affected the environment in the north. The arrival of Australian outposts accelerated these changes. Sorenson credited the introduction of new weapons, such as steel axes, with changing Fore agriculture, making it possible to grow not only sweet potatoes, but new crops like coffee.[632] New public roads installed for government jeeps disrupted the Southern Fore tendency towards "affect-geography," where the Fore would move through a space based on feelings and personal attachment to certain areas. With established roads, the Fore were forced into structured movement.[633] Entire communities set up their hamlets closer to the main roads to be nearer to the new resources and systems of management introduced by Australian officials.[634]

Close proximity to other families once again encouraged the establishment of systems of rule and order in what had once been unordered communities. Sorenson observed that the introduction of community regulations had a dramatic effect on the behavior of Fore children, who now showed a preference for organized games, such as kickball and other team sports, instead of the exploratory free play characteristic of previous generations. Again, Sorenson began to notice instances of aggressive and competitive behavior in children living closest to the roads.[635] The collaborative group rapport he had initially noticed when he entered the region in the early 1960s was rapidly disappearing as a result of the Fore's eagerness to adapt to a Western system of order.

Sorenson's interest in how Western influence altered expressions of human behavior in formerly isolated areas was further tested by the work of psychologist Paul

[632] Sorenson, "Socio-Ecological Change among the Fore," 370, Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest*, 230.
[633] Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest*, 227.
[634] Sorenson, "Socio-Ecological Change among the Fore," 366.
[635] Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest*, 241.

Ekman. Heavily influenced by Charles Darwin's 1872 book, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and* Animals, Ekman sought to test Darwin's claim that facial expressions of emotion were inherited and therefore universal.[636] To do this, Ekman needed to survey the facial expressions of both modern societies around the globe as well as cultures representing earlier stages in human development. In 1966, Ekman received a grant from the Advanced Research Project Agency to determine which aspects of human expressions were universal and which were culturally specific.[637] Using this grant, Ekman traveled to Papua New Guinea to work alongside Gajdusek and Sorenson as they continued their investigations of *kuru* among the Fore. Ekman soon recognized that the research film documents Sorenson and Gajdusek produced could also be used to study expressions of human emotion. Since the Fore were relatively isolated, Ekman believed a concentrated study of their gestures and facial expressions could provide a baseline for comparison with other cultures.

Ekman theorized that facial expressions could be both universal *and* culturally specific. When a person showed emotion, neurological triggers determined by human evolution controlled the moments of certain muscles in face. However, cultural factors determined which expressions of emotion were appropriate given a particular social situation. For example, Ekman tested the reactions of Japanese and American college students to pleasant and unpleasant films. He found that when Japanese students viewed the films as a group, emotional reactions were restrained to maintain the level of

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[636] Paul Ekman, *The Face of Man: Expressions of Universal Emotions in a New Guinea Village* (New York: Garland STPM Press, 1980), 4. In addition to Darwin, psychoanalyst Silvan Tomkins' work on universal body movement, gesticulations, and personality inspired Ekman to pursue his studies on movements within the human face. See Silvan S. Tomkins and Carrolle E. Izard, eds., *Affect, Cognition, and Personality: empirical studies* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, Inc., 1965).
[637] Katherine Ramsland, "The Man of 1,000 Faces: Paul Ekman and the Science of Facial Analysis," *The Forensic Examiner* (Winter 2012/Spring 2013): 64.

politeness dictated by cultural influence—an observation not noted in the American study. When students watched the footage individually, Ekman noted no observable difference between the reactions of the Japanese compared to those of the Americans.[638] In this case, Ekman differentiated between what he called genuine or biologically determined reactions and those governed by "display rules."[639]

It was around this time that Sorenson had begun to notice the impact of Australian officials on the temperaments of the Fore living in different regions, the Northern Fore being more aggressive and suspicious than those living in the south. Sorenson believed that the increased presence of Western faces had led the Fore to adopt certain facial expressions as a way of adapting to their new social circumstances. However, Sorenson and Ekman also claimed that there existed certain universals in expressions of emotion that transcended external cultural influence.[640] To test this hypothesis, Sorenson, Ekman, and a trained interpreter interviewed subjects in neighboring regions of the New Guinea Highlands who had experienced varying degrees of contact with outsiders. Using photographs taken by Tomkins and Ekman of seven basic emotions (happiness, fear, anger, surprise, sadness, disgust, and contempt), the investigators employed three

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[638] *The Face of Man*, 8.
[639] Ibid.
[640] Ekman and Sorenson have both written extensively about studying the Fore as a baseline for determining universal expressions of human emotion. In addition to Sorenson's section on emotion studies in *The Edge of the Forest*, see E. Richard Sorenson, "Culture and the expressions of emotion," in *Psychological Anthropology*, ed. Thomas Williams (The Hague: Mouton, 1975), 361-372; E. Richard Sorenson, "Social Organization and Facial Expressions of Emotions," *National Geographic Society Research Reports*, 1968 Projects, (1976): 389-409; Paul Ekman, E. Richard Sorenson, and Wallace V. Friesen, "Pan-cultural elements in Facial Displays of Emotion," *Science* 164 (April 1969): 86-88; Paul Ekman, Wallace V. Friesen, and Phoebe Ellsworth, *Emotion in the Human Face: Guidelines for Research and an Integration of Findings* (New York: Pergamon Press, Inc., 1972); Paul Ekman and Wallace V. Friesen, *Unmasking the Face: A Guide to Recognizing Emotions from Facial Clues* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975); and, Paul Ekman, *The Face of Man: Expressions of Universal Emotions in a New Guinea Village* (New York: Garland STPM Press, 1980).

methods to test for the existence of universals.[641] First, the interpreter asked subjects to identify which photograph represented an emotional state that resulted from a particular scenario, such as a theft or visit from a friend. This method proved difficult, since cultural and language barriers made it hard to select scenarios that called for a clear response from the subject. In another trial, subjects were shown images one at a time and asked to give a term describing the emotion. Again, language barriers made it difficult to translate concepts into equivalent terms. The final method required subjects to act out their interpretation of the emotions under investigation so they could be compared with preexisting photographs from other cultural groups (Figure 6.5). Despite difficulties with language barriers, Sorenson and Ekman concluded that there was significant agreement among subjects in different parts of New Guinea and the United States on the emotions under investigation, suggesting a degree of universality on expressions made by the human face. However, Sorenson maintained that exposure to other cultures through direct contact or even the media influenced ways in which certain kinds of emotion were expressed. Ekman similarly questioned their results, wondering if perhaps their inquiry had been made "too late" and if the Fore had "already been touched enough by the outside to have learned Western facial expressions."[642]

[641] These methods are described in Sorenson, *The Edge of the Forest*, 137-143.
[642] Ekman, *The Face of Man*, 10.

Figure 6.5. Examples of Ekman's categories of emotion (happiness, surprise, fear, anger, disgust/contempt, sadness). Paul Ekman, E. Richard Sorenson, Wallace V. Friesen, "Pan-Cultural Elements in Facial Displays of Emotion," *Science* 164 (April 4, 1969): 86-88.

Sorenson and Ekman's treatment of the Fore as a "Stone Age" society from whom important cultural and behavior information could be learned validated the assumptions of urgent anthropologists eager to document rapidly changing societies. Similarly, although Sorenson's primary research concentrated on changes in child behavior, his manuscript demonstrated that research film focused on one phenomenon could be used to analyze other occurrences important to practitioners across disciplines. Sorenson's chapters on how cultural change created ecological disturbances through the deforestation of the New Guinea Highlands showed how external influences affected not only the behavior of society, but also the surrounding environment. By using film retrospectively to analyze the changing behavior of Fore children over a decade, Sorenson was able to pinpoint specific moments of social and geographic disruption that shaped the region's present conditions. In effect, Sorenson succeeded in using previously filmed cinematic records to illustrate and explain some of the cultural and physical transformations of the New Guinea Highlands in the postwar period.

Sorenson's work with Ekman on expressions of human emotion also showed that the same visual records could be used for different kinds of scientific analysis. In fact, Ekman continued to use the Fore footage gathered by Gajdusek and Sorenson for studying *kuru* to create his Facial Action Coding System (FACS). Ekman has since used FACS to develop the Micro Expression Training Tool (METT), which is used today by law enforcement groups and the TSA as a lie detector.[643] Ekman's continued use of the Fore footage demonstrates that Sorenson's concept of an interdisciplinary and multi-

[643] For more on FACS and METT, see, Paul Ekman and Erika L. Rosenberg, *What the Face Reveals: Basic and Applied Studies of Spontaneous Expressions Using the Facial Action Coding System (FACS)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), and Gemma Warren, Elizabeth Schertler, and Peter Bull, "Detecting Deception from Emotional and Unemotional Cues," *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 33 (March 2009): 59-69.

purpose research film was viable. Whether or not research film served the needs of visual anthropology is another story altogether.

Debating Expertise: From Research Film to Visual Communication

As Sorenson worked to develop his research film method, members of the visual anthropological community continued to discuss the objectives and methods of the new subdiscipline. In September 1973, Sol Tax, in conjunction with the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES), sponsored the first International Conference on Visual Anthropology at the University of Chicago. Like Belmont, the aim of the conference was to assemble scholars interested in film in order to establish a greater consensus on its use for anthropology. Once again, the participants prepared and presented position papers on the merits of film use. These papers were later collected into a volume entitled *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, which became—and remains—a essential reading in the field.[644] Unlike the Belmont Conference, the underlying agenda of the conference was not the production of educational films but rather the use of film for urgent anthropological research. As a result, many of the papers emphasized film's use as an objective recording device in the field. Consequently, Sorenson, as the co-developer of the research film method, contributed three papers to the volume: one on strategies for research filming, one on the use of research films to create visual data banks, and one on the importance of preserving research films for urgent

[644] Three editions of *Principles* have been published: one in 1975 (1st ed.), one in 1995 (2nd ed.), and one in 2003 (3rd ed.). The second and third editions feature most of the papers from the first, with the addition of several papers on the role of television in visual anthropology. I rely primarily on the papers included in the first edition. See Paul Hockings, ed., *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, 1st ed. (The Hague: Mouton, 1975).

anthropology.[645] By the end of the conference, the attendees passed a second resolution reinforcing the points made in the 1968 resolution on visual anthropology and urgent anthropological research. It called for the immediate creation of a "world-wide filming program" and central storage facility and asked that filmmakers pay "special attention to those isolated and unique cultures whose ways of life were threatened with extinction."[646] Despite the unanimous support for the establishment of a film archive expressed at the 1970 Belmont Conference, budgetary constraints had postponed its construction. The conferees hoped that a second resolution showing the international importance of film for urgent anthropology would get the attention of funding agencies who could help make the film archive a reality.

However, not everyone in the visual anthropological community praised the outcomes of the 1973 conference. In his review of *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, Jay Ruby called the publication "truly unfortunate," noting that the contents appeared to be "more of an accident of who was able to attend the conference than the design of an editor trying to deal comprehensively with a new and developing field."[647] A contingent of film advocates—including Ruby, Sol Worth, and John Adair—had begun to question the discipline's preoccupation with using film for urgent anthropology. In particular, this group disagreed with the general tendency to treat the camera as an objective recording

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[645] E. Richard Sorenson and Allison Jablonko, "Research Filming of Naturally Occurring Phenomena: Basic Strategies," in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. Paul Hockings (The Hague: Mouton, 1975), 151-166, E. Richard Sorenson and Foster O. Chanock, "Research Films and the Communications Revolution," in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. Paul Hockings (The Hague: Mouton, 1975), 431-438, E. Richard Sorenson, "Visual Records, Human Knowledge, and the Future," in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. Paul Hockings (The Hague: Mouton, 1975), 463-476.

[646] "Resolution on Visual Anthropology," Passed at the IXth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Chicago, September 1973. Reprinted in Paul Hockings, ed., *Principles of Visual Anthropology* (The Hague: Mouton, 1975), 483-484.

[647] Jay Ruby, "Review, 'Principles of Visual Anthropology,'" *The American Anthropologist* 79 (1977): 137-138.

device. Instead, they viewed film as something requiring anthropological consideration in its own right and not just as a scientific instrument useful for making observations.[648] By thinking of film as an aesthetic statement along the same lines as paintings, drawings, and other visual media, they argued that films needed to be treated not as scientific tools, but as forms of cultural communication.[649] As a result, they found that the ethnographic and educational films made under the guise of urgent anthropology primarily showed the behaviors and concerns of the filmmaker, not the people being filmed.[650] In order to account for the inevitable cultural biases incorporated in a film, they argued that the filmmaker needed to learn how to become aware of them.

In 1967, Sol Worth and John Adair tried to get around these biases by giving cameras to a group of Navajo youths and teaching them basic film techniques. This experiment resulted in the series, *Navajo Film Themselves*, which demonstrated that films could be used as a means of cross-cultural communication between the filmmaker and the viewer.[651] Inspired by this experiment, the American Anthropological Association's Program in Ethnographic Film (PIEF) realigned its position on anthropological film,

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[648] Many filmmakers during this period tried to legitimize the use of the camera in anthropology by comparing it to other kinds of scientific instruments. Timothy Asch, John Marshall, and Peter Spier likened the camera to the telescope and the microscope, comparing the pursuits of an anthropologist to those of an astronomer or biologist. See Timothy Asch, John Marshall, and Peter Spier, "Ethnographic Film: Structure and Function," *Annual Review of* Anthropology 2 (1973): 185. Margaret Mead equated the camera to an ethnographer's notepad, capable of recording more than words alone can describe. See Margaret Mead, "Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words," in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. Paul Hockings (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1975), 3-12. These analogies, as Anna Grimshaw remarks, were used to show that ethnographic filming could be considered a "respectable kind of scientific endeavor." Unfortunately, these efforts often had the opposite effect, linking film to "simple scientism" resulting in the "marginalization of visual anthropology." Grimshaw, "Visual Anthropology," 301.

[649] Jay Ruby, "Is an Ethnographic Film a Filmic Ethnography?" *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication* 2 (1975): 104.

[650] Michael Intintoli, "Criteria to Evaluate Anthropological Film," *Society for the Anthropology of Visual Communication* 5 (Fall 1973): 2.

[651] Their report can be found in John Adair and Sol Worth, "The Navajo as filmmaker: a brief report of research in cross-cultural aspects of film communication," *American Anthropologist* 69 (1967): 76-78. A more detailed discussion of the visual communication approach can be found in Sol Worth, *Studying Visual Communication*, ed. Larry Gross (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).

forming the Society for the Anthropology of Visual Communication (SAVICOM). The new society elected former PIEF Secretary Jay Ruby as its director. Responding to the disciplinary flexibility provided by the research film method, the society aimed to bring together people working in anthropology, as well as communications, sociology, psychology, and history of art.[652] However, it stressed that since these disciplines focused on the "cultural dimensions of visual communication and behavior," their work had to align with the "conceptualizations and methodologies common to ethnology and anthropology."[653] Because it promoted visual communication as essentially a form of anthropological investigation, SAVICOM maintained that only a trained anthropologist should produce ethnographic films. In turn, it was the responsibility of filmmakers working outside the discipline to consult a trained anthropologist so as to ensure that all footage met the standards of reflexivity called for by anthropology. As Anna Grimshaw suggests, by promoting an active method of "disciplinary self-consciousness," this group of visual anthropologists anticipated the "reflexive turn" that came to categorize much of cultural anthropology in the 1980s.[654]

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[652] Sol Worth, "A Proposal for the Founding of a Society for Visual Anthropology," *PIEF Newsletter* 3 (Spring 1972): 1.
[653] Ibid.
[654] Grimshaw, "Visual Anthropology," 305. Grimshaw aligns this turning point with the publication of James Clifford's and George Marcus' 1986 book, *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Grimshaw characterizes the period leading up to the reflexive turn as "a period of intense debate that was founded upon the sustained interrogation of established concepts (culture), methods (fieldwork), and representational forms (monograph)." Her point is that these kinds of debates were already taking place among visual anthropologists more than a decade earlier. See Grimshaw, "Visual Anthropology," 305.

Finding a Home: Visual Anthropology and the Smithsonian's National Anthropological Film Center

At the same time SAVICOM was debating the theoretical aspects of film, steps were finally being taken to construct an archive for anthropological film. After several years seeking startup funds, the Smithsonian was awarded $91,724 by the National Endowment for the Humanities to support the creation of a "world film sample" of human behavior.[655] An additional $103,620 was also awarded by the National Institutes of Health for the purpose of "investigating patterned human behavior and studies of basic human potential" demonstrating evolutionary or cultural traits similar to those observed by Gajdusek and Sorenson during their research in Papua New Guinea.[656] Both of these funding sources emphasized the interdisciplinary application of film as outlined by Sorenson in his research film method. With the availability of these funds, the National Anthropological Film Center (NAFC) opened the doors of its new facility in L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, D.C., on 1 May 1975. In her comments at the opening of the Center, Margaret Mead reminded the crowd about what was at stake for the new archive and its importance for urgent anthropology: "The last man on Raratonga probably died this morning and we have lost something irretrievable. So I'm saying that the last man on Raratonga died this morning and we haven't made a film of him. Unless we get going something will be irretrievably lost and we will have failed in our stewardship to future generations."[657]

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[655] "A Proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Research Grants," November 10, 1973, appendix 10 in E. Richard Sorenson and Gay Neuberger's *The National Anthropological Film Center: A Report on its Beginnings and Programs*, 1979, NAFC Papers, box 5, folder: NAFC: A Report on Beginnings, HSFA.

[656] NIH Contract #75-C-23, August 9, 1974 to Smithsonian Institution, in "NAFC: A Report on its Beginnings and Programs," NAFC Papers, box 5, folder: NAFC: A Report on Beginnings, HSFA.

[657] As reprinted in Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 201.

Although happy to have the facility in operation, Sorenson and Mead already worried about the Center's future stability. The startup grants provided by the NEH and NIH were intended to cover only the first two years of development for the NAFC, after which it would be fully incorporated and funded as part of the Smithsonian Institution. However, administrative issues related to tensions within the Department of Anthropology and the Center for the Study of Man had caused major delays in the Center's initial construction. Mead and Sorenson wondered if there was a way to "insulate" the Center from the internal politics plaguing the Smithsonian's anthropologists by finding a separate administrative home for film within the Institution.[658] Despite their pleas, S. Dillon Ripley and his new Assistant Secretary for Science, David Challinor, agreed that the Center for the Study of Man was the best administrative home for the activities of the Film Center because of its interdisciplinary approach to understanding humans and the environment.[659] Yet Challinor remarked that the Film Center should eventually become part of the National Museum of Natural History if it wanted to survive, as semi-autonomous units often became "very vulnerable in the Smithsonian budget priorities."[660] It is possible that Challinor saw the Film Center as adding another wrinkle to the already problematic situation within Smithsonian anthropology, and hoped to avoid future issues by pushing for the Center's inclusion in a pre-existing administrative structure.

Despite these concerns, Sorenson set to work establishing the Center's operational policies and projects, setting the course for its future activities. One of

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[658] Richard Sorenson to Margaret Mead, September 20, 1973, NAFC Papers, box 15, folder 1, HSFA.
[659] David Challinor to the Record, "National Anthropological Film Center," March 21, 1974, Assistant Secretary for Science, Records, 1963-1978, Record Unit 254, box 1, folder: CSM: National Anthropological Film Center, 1970-1975 (1 of 2), Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[660] Ibid.

Sorenson's major conditions upon being elected the Center's Director was that he be allowed to continue making research films. He therefore prioritized research filming of vanishing cultures as the first objective for the new Center. As a result, the establishment of an accessible film archive as proposed at Belmont quickly became a secondary activity.[661] Sorenson justified his focus on filming by linking it to urgent anthropology and the necessity of using film to understand the changing role of human beings in the postwar world.[662] In an article for the *New York Times*, he emphasized the importance of film for providing clues to human development, stating, "We don't know very much about our own species, man. When we know more about what's possible, we'll have a much firmer foundation for deciding what to do to solve our own problems."[663] He argued that such a foundation would also mean a clearer direction for the archival activities of the Center. In the meantime, Sorenson commenced projects recording cultural isolates in areas of the Cook Islands, the New Hebrides, Nepal, Micronesia, Afghanistan, India, Mexico and Brazil.[664] Many of these projects took advantage of the Smithsonian's access to PL-480 money, which had come to be a major source of funding for urgent anthropology beginning in 1967. As a result, many of the projects included collaborations with local filmmakers who did not necessarily have any anthropological training. This was of great concern to the members of SAVICOM, who were invested in retaining the Center's anthropological orientation, at least to some degree.[665]

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[661] E. Richard Sorenson to Advisory Council, NAFC, "Preliminary policy statement on acquiring and accessioning films," June 17, 1975, NAFC Papers, box 1, folder: general statement documents, HSFA.
[662] E. Richard Sorenson, "To Further Phenomenological Inquiry: The National Anthropological Film Center," *Current Anthropology* 16 (June 1975): 267-269.
[663] Linda Charlton, "Isolated Societies Filmed for New Insights," *The New York Times*, 18 October 1975, 60.
[664] National Anthropological Film Center, 1976 Annual Report, NAFC Papers, box 1, folder: Accession Policy, 1975, HSFA.
[665] Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 195.

Sorenson dismissed their reservations. By 1975, he had come to disagree with the "communication paradigm" proposed by Ruby and others, considering it a limitation to the potential of visual inquiry and the broader scientific applications of film.[666] Supporters of the Film Center, especially Margaret Mead and Norman Miller, were encouraged by the research direction proposed by Sorenson and saw great opportunity for global collaboration. As project director of the American Universities Field Staff (AUFS), Norman Miller was already using Sorenson's film technique in the production of a television series on global change. Entitled *Faces of Change*, the series began in 1971 and depended on the expertise of journalists and correspondents living abroad in countries such as Bolivia, Kenya, Afghanistan, Taiwan, and China and focused on depicting "a variety of cultural and ecological situations" around the world.[667] As with Sorenson's earlier work, these films were intentionally created to speak to interests beyond anthropology and were produced with both a pedagogical and scientific value in mind. Similarly, since the filmmakers were generally journalists and not anthropologists, the series demonstrated that useful footage of international societies could be achieved without the requirements of university training in anthropology.

The Center's collaborative film projects had additional impact within the international community. A number of heads of state, including Prime Minister of India, Indira Ghandi, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, Albert Henry, and the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, recognized the value of film documents for increasing their country's visibility in the international politics. These leaders, along with other representatives,

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[666] E. Richard Sorenson, "Visual Evidence: an Emerging Force in Visual Anthropology," *National Anthropological Film Center Occasional Papers* (December 1975): 1-10.
[667] Robert Trotter, "Filming Fading Faces: Anthropological Film Center Debuts with Innovative Series," *Science News* 107 (May 1975): 327.

encouraged Sorenson to work with local governments and academic institutions to document the cultural traditions of their respective nations.[668] In light of the Film Center's limited startup funds, Sorenson saw the access to foreign funding and resources that accompanied these invitations as another way to maintain the Center's initial capacity for making research films. In turn, these opportunities further shifted the programming emphasis of the Center away from its initial aim—the establishment of a film archive—to a much broader focus on international film projects.

As predicted, by the end of 1976, the Film Center was running out of its startup funds. In an attempt to gather more money so Sorenson could continue his work abroad, Margaret Mead approached several private institutions, including the Rockefeller Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, and the Ford Foundation. However, all of these efforts were thwarted. McGeorge Bundy, President of the Ford Foundation, wrote Mead explaining that the only way the NAFC would be able to gain donor investment would be through a direct show of funding support from the Smithsonian.[669] Although the Smithsonian had agreed to house the Film Center and pay for Sorenson's salary as part of the investment of the National Institutes of Health, it had provided almost no additional financial support for its activities, causing potential donors to question the Center's long-term stability. Looking to improve the Center's internal support, Sorenson approached Ripley and Challinor about getting money directly from the Smithsonian to pay the salaries of the Center's core staff members, who at the time were funded only through individual short-term research grants. A full-time staff at the Smithsonian, Sorenson

[668] "Project Development in Third World Nations, A Progress Report to the Advisory Council," February 3, 1978, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: 1978 Reports, HSFA.
[669] McGeorge Bundy to Margaret Mead, April 3, 1975, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: April 1968-Dec.1976, HSFA.

argued, was essential for research film projects, as they were the ones responsible for helping with the annotation and processing of the films, and, incidentally, the establishment of an archive. Smithsonian payment of these salaries would demonstrate the Institution's support of the Center's activities to potential donors while ensuring that archival activities took place while Sorenson was out of the country.[670]

But David Challinor still believed that the best way to provide financial support and infrastructural stability was to further integrate the Film Center into the organizational umbrella of the Center for the Study of Man. Although it had always been understood that the NAFC would be part of the CSM, initial difficulties in defining the Center's projects and space, as well as its developing influence abroad, had forced the Film Center directly under his administration. This of course was precisely what Mead and Sorenson had been hoping for, since it meant that the Center could exist outside the bounds of anthropology. Yet Challinor knew little about film projects and the needs of such an archive and felt uncomfortable about managing the Center. For him, the solution lay in providing a more concrete administrative home for the Center for the Study of Man, and, in turn, the National Anthropological Film Center, through the physical construction of Ripley's proposed Museum of Man. While it was not possible to create a separate building at the time due to lack of funds and approval from Congress, Challinor proposed that Ripley rename the National Museum of Natural History so as to include the Museum of Man as part of its title.[671] As a result of this action, Porter Kier, a

[670] Richard Sorenson to David Challinor, "Personnel in the National Anthropological Film Center," October 29, 1975, NAFC Papers, box 7, folder: Correspondence – David Challinor, 1971-1978, HSFA.
[671] S. Dillon Ripley to Messrs. Challinor, Jameson, Blitzer, September 27, 1977, Assistant Secretary for Science Records, Record Unit 329, box 4, folder 3, SIA. The Museum of Man remained listed on the sign outside of the National Museum of Natural History well into the early 1990s.

paleobiologist and the present Director of the Museum for Natural History, was also appointed as head of the Museum of Man.

This decision alarmed Sorenson, who promptly questioned Challinor about the "appropriateness of appointing an individual to direct a Museum of Man whose expertise was not in the study of man."[672] Concerned for the future of the Center, Sorenson sent Kier a memorandum in which he explicitly outlined his misgivings about the Film Center's incorporation into the Museum of Man and the Museum of Natural History. Sorenson felt that forcing the Film Center into an organizational structure for which it was not suited would be analogous to "trying to house a baby giraffe in a stable built for horses and then waiting for its neck to be broken as it grows up."[673] Sorenson argued that the shape of the Film Center was still developing, and that it might end up being too broad for the sort of scientific focus typical of NMNH.[674] In the end, Challinor once again conceded to keeping the Film Center under his jurisdiction until it established a firmer financial and disciplinary footing.

The grand opening of the Film Center in the mid-1970s marked a moment of success for filmmakers eager to answer the call of urgent anthropology. Those interested in film's use for research and for teaching finally had access to the kinds of resources they had been seeking since 1965. Similarly, a number of foreign leaders recognized the production of films as a technologically sophisticated way to respond to the cultural and political changes inspired by modernization. Thanks to the availability of PL-480 funds, films could be made in collaboration with local scholars and used to aid teaching as well

[672] Richard Sorenson to David Challinor, April 28, 1976, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: 1968-1976, HSFA.
[673] Richard Sorenson to Porter Kier, "The Baby Giraffe," July 3, 1976, NAFC Papers, box 3 folder: April 1968-Dec. 1976, HSFA.
[674] Ibid.

as public relations. However, external and internal forces were already challenging the Center's early success. Members of the anthropological community who felt films about other cultures needed to be treated reflexively grew progressively frustrated as the Film Center's research focus ignored early objectives to create a world ethnographic film sample and archive. Simultaneously, the Smithsonian's internal administration struggled to find a place to accommodate the Center's broad disciplinary and international scope. Although the Center maintained a safe position under the direction of David Challinor, Challinor's own preference that the Center be placed elsewhere meant that it was functioning essentially on borrowed time. As the Center continued to build its programs and cultivate its allegiance to urgent anthropology, serious questions about its original function within the discipline of anthropology and its administrative arrangement as part of the Smithsonian began to arise.

A Center in Crisis: Tensions Come to a Head

By 1977, the uncertainty of financial, administrative, and disciplinary stability was beginning to affect the morale of the Film Center. An error in budget calculation cost the Center nearly $30,000, and with most of the funds being put toward international film costs, there was very little left to finance personnel. Because of the Smithsonian's status as a federal institution, only Congress could adjust the budgetary mistake. Faced with the reality of the Center's fate and the Smithsonian's reluctance to fund their positions, its core staff members each submitted letters of resignation to Sorenson, with the result that all of the Center's archival activities became completely dormant.[675]

[675] Richard Sorenson to David Challinor, "A Problem of Survival," December 6, 1976, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: April 1968-Dec. 1976, HSFA.

Discouraged, Sorenson turned again to Margaret Mead and the Advisory Council of AFRI. Together they raised the idea that the members of AFRI, as prominent social scientists, could make personal pleas to Congress to save the Center. In February, Sorenson asked Ripley about the possibility of non-Smithsonian parties contacting Congress on behalf of the Center. In his response, Ripley indicated that it might be useful, promising to "green light" the activity so long as Smithsonian administrators be kept informed.[676] As before, Margaret Mead took it upon herself to serve as the key spokesperson for the Center, spearheading a letter-writing campaign that asked Senators and Representatives to show support for the urgent work being carried out by the Film Center. After all, one letter asked, "What could be more important than the preservation of knowledge about the human species?"[677]

On 19 April 1977, Margaret Mead testified before the Senate Subcommittee as a "concerned citizen" of the United States and of "humanity."[678] In her testimony, Mead emphasized the urgency of documenting the isolated ways of life threatened by the "cultural convergence" caused by modernization. In particular, she addressed the need to create visual data of "special expressions of human ability" around the world.[679] "To whatever degree we allow such data to vanish," Mead implored, "we diminish our ability

[676] Gordon Gibson to David Challinor, "Meeting with Mr. Ripley on February 25, 1977, concerning funding for the National Anthropological Film Center," March 9, 1978, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: Jan-July 1977, HSFA.
[677] George Spindler to Senator Robert C. Byrd, March 8, 1977, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: Jan-July 1977, HSFA.
[678] In a letter dated March 9, 1977, it appears that Sorenson actually asked Ripley whether or not it would be more appropriate to have Mead present along with the Smithsonian representatives or as a "concerned citizen." Sorenson indicates that he wanted her on "our team," but whether or not that is the "Smithsonian" or the "concerned" parties is unclear. See Ullberg Report, appendix 13.
[679] "Testimony by Margaret Mead to the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies, April 19, 1977," NAFC Papers, box 15, folder: Margaret Mead [2 of 2], HSFA.

to understand our own species."[680] Mead also reiterated the importance of Sorenson's contacts abroad, and the need to take full advantage of his access to areas once completely inaccessible to anthropologists. Thanks to her efforts, the NAFC was awarded a $255,000 increase to its 1978 budget, with the understanding that the additional funds be used solely to "record crucial reserves of traditional ways of life and culture in Third World Nations."[681] Although this decision limited the scope of the Film Center's urgent anthropological projects geographically, it maintained the broad application of research film originally envisioned by Sorenson. However, the additional funds for filming alone meant that the funding needed for staff salaries and archival projects remained non-existent.

Regardless of this setback, the hearings were an overall success for the National Anthropological Film Center. Although the Center did not receive the full amount requested (Mead had requested an additional $426,000 to the 1978 budget) it finally obtained the support from the Smithsonian it had been seeking. But the Center's new, federally recognized status as part of the Smithsonian's budget and administration also meant that it could no longer retain its independence. The fact that the Film Center had existed as an essentially autonomous unit for so long in spite of its intended place within the Center for the Study of Man was a point of contention for other scholars at the Smithsonian, especially those belonging to the fragmented Office of Anthropology, who felt that the "luxurious way" the Institution was supporting Sorenson had created a "lack of any additional support for funding of anthropological needs in the Museum [of Natural

[680] Ibid.
[681] Senator Yates, "Report, Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, House of Representatives," NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: Jan-June 1977, HSFA.

History/Man]" and engendered "resentment" among Smithsonian anthropologists.[682] Based on administrative concerns, the Center's success in acquiring a federal monetary base, and Congress' recognition of its international importance, Challinor thus decided that the Center could now survive without his direct supervision. Beginning in October, the Film Center, as an arm of the Center for the Study of Man, would be incorporated into the Museum of Man. However, since funding was still not available to build a physical structure for the Museum of Man, its activities were placed under the direction of Porter Kier and the National Museum of Natural History. As a result, Kier was now responsible for determining the Film Center's yearly budget.[683]

Sorenson did not take the news well. He considered the incorporation of the Film Center into Natural History a form of "banishment" and worried that having to compete for funding as a non-museum program within a traditional museum setting would be detrimental to the Center's future. Sorenson also worried about the reaction from Third World leaders, whom he feared would be insulted by having their cultural records put into the same physical space as displays of wild animals, and would therefore question the soundness of continuing to support the Center's film projects.[684] Sorenson stressed that his subjects were human beings whose cultural history should not be relegated to the same detached study as museum objects and specimens. Ripley did not seem to share Sorenson's concerns, commenting, "I have a feeling that the Center for the Study of Man belongs in the National Museum of Man which exists physically in the National Museum of Natural History, which has played host to anthropologists (archaeologists and

[682] Porter Kier to Dillon Ripley, through David Challinor, April 26, 1977, RU 329, box 4, folder 3: CSM: NAFC, 1977, SIA.
[683] David Challinor to Richard Sorenson, "NAFC within the Center for the Study of Man," June 20, 1977, NAFC Papers, box 7, folder: Correspondence – Challinor, 1971-1978, HSFA.
[684] "The Meeting of July 25, 1977," NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: July – Sept 1977, HSFA.

ethnologists) since its inception. I don't see why the Anthropological Film Center shouldn't be part of the Center for the Study of Man, so long as it is a part of the Smithsonian Institution."[685] For his part, Challinor felt that regardless of the philosophical or ethical questions raised by placing the Film Center within NMNH, Kier's direction would certainly be the best answer administratively.[686] Ripley, Challinor, and Kier assured Sorenson that "the new administrative arrangement" would "in no way compromise the program's independence."[687]

Unfortunately for the Smithsonian administration, the backlash to the Film Center's incorporation into the National Museum of Natural History was substantial. Letters from anthropologists and donors expressed concern that the Center's efforts were in fact being compromised, and that the change in the administrative placement of the Center would "raise serious questions about continued support" from outside sources.[688] Margaret Mead wrote to thank Ripley for his help with arranging the testimony before the Senate Subcommittee but implored him to "find a way to sustain the independence of the Film Center from other programs and museum administration."[689] In a letter to Ripley, Sol Tax expressed his own dismay to see many of the other programs of the Center for the Study of Man, including his own urgent anthropology program, fall by the wayside as

[685] Dillon Ripley, "Comments on Trillium Memo," July 19, 1977, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: July – Sept 1977, HSFA.
[686] Ibid.
[687] Porter Kier to Richard Sorenson, "Operating procedures between the National Anthropological Film Center and the Center for the Study of Man," September 29, 1977, NAFC Papers, box 4, folder: Feb. – May 1979, HSFA.
[688] Jeremy Waletzky to Dillon Ripley, July 29, 1977, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: July –Sept 1977, HSFA.
[689] Margaret Mead to Dillon Ripley, September 15, 1977, NAFC Papers, box 15, folder: Margaret Mead, [2 of 2], HSFA.

a result of being tied too closely to the program and budget of the Museum of Natural History.[690]

Sorenson also responded to the administration's threat on the Center's autonomy through its absorption into the structure and budget of the National Museum of Natural History by distancing himself from it intellectually. In order to dissociate the activities of the Center from those of anthropology, Sorenson opted to rename the Center: first, as the National Research Film Center and finally as the National Human Studies Film Center. The Advisory Council of AFRI also tried to cut ties with NMNH, arguing that, unlike museums, which deal with objects and specimens, the Center was a "new kind of academic enterprise which works with new kinds of materials and with new kinds of methods only now being worked out."[691] Recalling the Center's founding purpose of recording the changing human condition, Sorenson questioned the appropriateness of grouping the study of human beings as part of the natural sciences and instead once again advocated the use of research films for "humanistic studies." The investigation of human beings by other human beings, he argued, made it difficult to "separate the process of inquiry from expressions of value."[692] Sorenson maintained that humanistic studies extended beyond "natural-science trained anthropologists," instead applying to broader inquiries on human development and behavior.[693] Although he could not foresee all

[690] By the mid-1970s, the activities of the Center for the Study of Man were primarily focused on the completion of a new Handbook of the North American Indian, meaning that other programs—including the urgent anthropology program—had been essentially sidelined. See "The Meeting of July 25, 1977," NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: July-Sept. 1977, HSFA.
[691] "Potential and Needs of the National Anthropological Film Center," A Report prepared by the Executive Committee, September 16, 1978. Loose manuscript, HSFA.
[692] E. Richard Sorenson, "Toward a Concept of Humanistic Studies: The Limits of Natural Science," Paper presented at the 10th ICAES Meeting, New Delhi, December 1978.
[693] E. Richard Sorenson to NAFC Files, "Recent example of how natural science administration adversely affects the humanistic programs of the NAFC," September 24, 1978, NAFC Papers, box 3, folder: July-Sept 1977, HSFA.

possible payoffs of using film, he believed that the "phenomenological records" produced using film still had a "yet unexplored role to play in the pursuit of humanistic knowledge and the refinement of human observation."[694] The real issue at stake, it seems, was Sorenson's fear of a non-museum program being funded by the director of a museum, and one who had no understanding of anthropology at that.

The ongoing conflict between Kier and Sorenson, and in turn between Smithsonian administration and AFRI, culminated in the creation of several review committees representing either Smithsonian or Film Center interests. As the Film Center became increasingly focused on international film projects, Sorenson's loyalties within AFRI also began to wane. In November 1978, AFRI president and chief organizer Margaret Mead passed away. With her death, Sorenson lost his most influential ally and spokesperson, and became vulnerable to the attacks of members of AFRI who had remained mostly quiet under Mead's aegis. Among these suddenly vocal critics were a number of appointees on Kier's review committee, including William Fitzhugh, Gordon Gibson, Walter Goldschmidt, Warner Williams, and Karl Heider—all anthropologists who had supported the creation of the Film Center at the Belmont Conference but who now questioned Sorenson's neglect of its archival activities. Working from a series of reports compiled by Sorenson (known as the "Blue Book"), the Committee concluded that while the Smithsonian did need to provide the Center "augmented support" and "increased space and facilities," the NAFC also needed to reevaluate its programming to better address its archival needs.[695]

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[694] Ibid.

[695] "Report of the Advisory Committee on the National Anthropological Film Center, submitted to Dr. Porter M. Kier, Director of the National Museum of Natural History," Loose manuscript, HSFA.

In June 1979, a new Programming and Policies Committee met under the authority of Acting Director of the National Museum of Natural History and Museum of Man, James F. Mello, to propose adjustments to the Center's operation.[696] Frustrated with Sorenson, Kier had resigned from his position to conduct fieldwork, leaving Mello to continue the review of the NAFC's activities in his place. The resulting P&P Report proposed several mandates that would permanently alter the shape of the Center. First, the Committee determined that the Film Center had become so involved in Third World film projects that it had failed to fulfill its original purpose through the creation of an ethnographic film archive. Second, the Committee acknowledged that the "humanistic" approach of the Center was, in fact, anthropological in nature, and that Sorenson's arguments against keeping the NAFC in a scientific institution were contrary to its mission and intent. Third, the Committee found the scope of research film projects too limited to the activities and interests of Sorenson and the NAFC's staff, and called for both a "peer review" process to approve projects and the acceptance of non-Center project proposals. Fourth, the allocated budget needed to be evenly distributed to all areas of Center activity and could not be applied primarily to research film projects. The P&P Committee, with agreement from AFRI, suggested that a substantial amount of funding be shifted away from film projects and applied to establishing an archive in which existing and future projects could be safely stored and accessed. By following each of these suggestions, the Committee believed that the provisions set out by the Belmont Conference could be more immediately achieved.[697]

[696] This committee included Asen Balikci, Karl Heider, William Fitzhugh, and Samuel Gibbs, among others.
[697] "Report of the P&P Committee," RU 329, box 5, folder 3, SIA.

Sorenson's control over the Center was further diminished at the 1979 Annual Meeting of AFRI, where filmmaker and anthropologist Karl Heider had taken over as Chair following Mead's death. Under Heider's leadership, AFRI passed a new resolution giving it the right to take over the Center's activities in light of its unfulfilled purpose under Sorenson's direction. The resolution criticized Sorenson for his inability to follow the guidelines established at Belmont to develop an accessible film archive, and also chided him for his "disregard for the established and expressed purposes of the anthropological discipline."[698] The last point of the resolution was an urgent request to the Smithsonian asking that professional anthropologists be brought in to oversee the renewed direction of the Center as an archive for anthropological film representative of all of the world's cultures. This resolution demonstrated that after nearly ten years, the vision of an anthropological film archive first approved at Belmont had yet to be achieved, and the tenuous relationship between AFRI, the NAFC, and the Smithsonian was still undefined.

On 1 October 1981, the National Anthropological Film Center was divided into two separate components: the Human Studies Film Archives (HSFA) and the Third World Film Center (also called the Research Film Center). As a result of the outcries of visual anthropologists who sought to return the Center's focus back to the development of an archive for anthropological use, the Film Archives was placed administratively in the Department of Anthropology under Pamela Wintle, who continues to serve as its acting director. In 1982, the Smithsonian incorporated the Film Archives as a sibling to the National Anthropological Archives and moved both facilities to their present location

[698] "Anthropological Film Research Institute, Annual Meeting, December 4, 1980," NAFC Papers, box 8, folder: AFRI – 1980, HSFA.

in Suitland, Maryland. Today, the Human Studies Film Archives and the National Anthropological Archives exist as separate facilities, but remain joined under the leadership of Jake Homiak, an anthropologist and filmmaker. Sorenson continued making films through the Third World Film Center, which stayed administratively tied to the Center for the Study of Man and the still non-existent Museum of Man. Despite one last effort to organize the construction of the Museum of Man in the early 1980s, increased support for the establishment of a museum devoted to the American Indian and Ripley's retirement from the Smithsonian in 1984 removed any hope of it coming to fruition. As a result, Sorenson's research program remained tied to the budget of the Museum of Natural History, where it was eventually phased out in favor of more museum-oriented programs in 1983.

Similarly, after nearly two decades of discussions on the use of film for anthropological research and teaching, the fledging subdiscipline of visual anthropology remained a fragmented community within the larger discipline. Although anthropology began to take seriously the reflexive turn advocated by SAVICOM in the early 1970s, the use of the camera as more than a teaching aid continued to be met with skepticism. The inability of the National Anthropological Film Center to adequately address the archival needs of both visual and urgent anthropologists meant that a central repository for ethnographic film records also remained absent. In fact, Margaret Mead's films on Bali—the very films that had proven so useful for Sorenson's own research method and had inspired her support for his activities—were deposited at the Library of Congress instead of at the National Anthropological Film Center.[699] This action demonstrated that by the

[699] Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 200.

mid-1980s, both the support of urgent anthropology and the belief that film could be used as an objective cultural record had largely eroded.

Conclusion

What, then, can be understood from the history of the National Anthropological Film Center? On the surface, it suggests a failure, or at the very least a missed opportunity to develop a fully-fledged repository for the production and storage of ethnographic film. In his account of the Center's history, HSFA director Jake Homiak laments this fact most of all, commenting on how the current budget for the Film Archives represents only a fraction of Sorenson's funding during the 1970s. As he put it: "The concept of research film was developed in a time when funding sources were flush and when the Smithsonian was committed to building a national center which would provide support for the development of such films, as well as the staff and facilities to support the broader research endeavor."[700]

While Homiak describes the incongruence of Sorenson's research film method within visual anthropology as a primary reason for its failure, his last observation about the unique circumstances that allowed for the Center's establishment in the first place requires further reflection. Although not officially established until 1975, the National Anthropological Film Center grew out of a particular set of institutional, intellectual, and methodological conditions that began to take shape at the Smithsonian during the mid-1960s. These conditions in turn supported the development of a collaborative, interdisciplinary program in urgent anthropology reflecting the interests of Ripley and Tax in bridging the human and ecological sciences. Simultaneously, the increased use of

[700] Homiak, "Timothy Asch, the Rise of Visual Anthropology, and the Human Studies Film Archives," 200.

motion picture film in both the natural and social sciences for recording, investigating, and communicating knowledge encouraged new possibilities for its application in anthropology more generally. While some anthropologists and filmmakers argued for its benefits for teaching, others, including Richard Sorenson and Margaret Mead, contended that film could act as an objective recording device capable of documenting a wide range of unmediated visual data on human beings. The multidisciplinary possibility of research film advocated by Sorenson—as well as its ability to capture visual records that could be stored for future use—appealed to Ripley and other advocates of urgent anthropology. The importance of the intellectual ties between Ripley's expansive approach to urgent anthropology and Sorenson's interdisciplinary understanding of research film therefore cannot be overstated. Ultimately, however, these aims proved too broad to fit in with the anthropological programs of the National Museum of Natural History, leaving the Film Center with no clear administrative home within the Smithsonian's museum complex.

Additionally, while Sorenson's appeal to the camera's scientific objectivity initially legitimized its use for urgent anthropological research, by the early 1970s these same arguments faced criticism from a professionalizing group of visual anthropologists. This group sought to use the camera not as a means to record and preserve records of societies undergoing change, but instead as a way to communicate and engage with them. These efforts mirrored methodological shifts affecting anthropology as a whole, as the discipline began experimenting with new strategies for confronting cultural bias within its written accounts.[701] As a result of these changing interests, the positivist collection of ethnographic data as endorsed by urgent anthropology became a point of contention within the field, thereby undermining the Film Center's credibility. Thus while the

[701] This is most clearly conveyed in Clifford and Marcus, *Writing Culture.*

multidisciplinary applications of research film for studying human nature supported by urgent anthropology facilitated the creation of the National Anthropological Film Center, the reluctance of both Sorenson and the Smithsonian to reshape urgent anthropology to conform to the models of anthropological self-reflexivity similarly led to its decline.

But what of the films themselves? Although Sorenson neglected to fully develop the Film Center's archival operations during his time as director, examining its history and especially its ties to the salvage underpinnings of urgent anthropology may offer answers as to why the Human Studies Film Archives continues to exist in spite of its turbulent beginnings. Historian of science Rebecca Lemov has recently articulated the concept of "secondary endangerment," the notion that the representation of things or ideas once considered endangered is itself now in need of saving.[702] In her own interpretation of Levi-Strauss's 1965 bicentennial speech, she shows how by the 1960s anthropologists became less concerned with disappearing cultures, but increasingly invested in assembling the "disappearing documents" preserving an image of those cultures. This point accurately reflects the anxieties of filmmakers and early supporters of the Film Center who, even if they disagreed with Sorenson's film methods, hoped to see an ethnographic film archive come to fruition.

Tying the Center's creation back to the cross-disciplinary aims of urgent anthropology, however, offers another explanation for the Archive's existence—the latent potential of research film.[703] While Ripley never realized his vision of a Museum

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[702] Rebecca Lemov, "Anthropological data in danger, c. 1945-1965," in *Endangerment, Biodiversity and Culture*, ed. Fernando Vidal and Nelia Dias (New York: Routledge, 2015), 90.

[703] I am borrowing this idea of "latency" from Joanna Radin, who uses it to describe the potential genetic information latent in frozen blood samples collected as part of the International Biological Program. See Radin, "Latent Life: Concepts and Practices of Human Tissue Preservation in the International Biological Program," *Social Studies of Science* 43 (2013): 495-596.

of Man integrating the human and ecological sciences, thanks to the Film Center's grounding in urgent anthropology, a record of these communities and their surroundings remain within the films housed at the HSFA. Because of the context in which they were made, these films may still contain significant material for researchers working in disciplines across the environmental and human sciences. In recent years, digital repositories such as ARKive and the Digital Himalaya Project have been created to host images and footage of endangered plants, animals, and cultural behaviors, demonstrating the importance of film records for preserving data for future use.[704] Films housed at the HSFA could offer a similar opportunity. By thinking broadly about how records of human behavior speak beyond a strictly anthropological framework, these films may provide a new understanding of the application of the camera for investigations in the medical, cultural, and ecological sciences, as well as other scientific and humanistic studies. But much work needs to be done to ensure that these records continue to be preserved, since much footage remains without proper annotation and curation. Ironically, this record will itself need urgent care in order to survive into the future.

[704] See Mark Turin, "Digital Himalaya," accessed October 12, 2013, http://www.digitalhimalaya.com, and, Wildscreen USA, Inc., "ARKive," accessed October 12, 2013, http://www.arkive.org.

CONCLUSION

What *was* urgent about urgent anthropology? As the events outlined in this dissertation make clear, the answer is more complicated than the simple question suggests. By analyzing the circumstances underlying urgent anthropology's development and expansion within the Smithsonian Institution, I have argued that the idea of urgency (along with related notions of crisis, salvage, and endangerment) came to hold a variety of meanings for different people. Thinking about the rhetorical power of these terms explains why urgent anthropology became such a useful intellectual and organizational framework for pursuing projects cutting across the human and ecological sciences during the 1960s and 1970s. This study in turn demands that historians of science pay more attention to how scientists and others have employed such concepts to legitimize and rally support for research that does not fit squarely within a single discipline. It likewise offers an alternative strategy for understanding interdisciplinary collaborations by focusing more on the identification of like-minded approaches to a particular set of problems and less on the limitations imposed by distinct disciplinary boundaries—a method especially helpful for assessing the ever-changing relationship of human beings with the natural environment.

Conceived as a program dedicated to the global documentation of "vanishing" cultures, urgent anthropology under the leadership of Dillon Ripley and Sol Tax grew into a collaborative, multidisciplinary project that championed the integration of perspectives from the human sciences, especially anthropology, with contemporary views on ecology. Through the combination of these fields, they claimed that the resulting data held potential applications for a wide range of disciplines and could be used to develop

insights and solutions to the pressing social and scientific questions of the period. For Ripley, data collected from changing cultures promised the reintegration of human beings as active components of their environment and a means of applying cultural and social explanations of human behavior to larger conversations about ecosystem management and conservation. For Tax, such knowledge provided a chance for anthropologists to both engage with cultures undergoing change and, through the methods outlined in his philosophy of action anthropology, to aid those cultures in understanding and confronting those same changes. These ends similarly mirrored the larger concerns of anthropologists, who in the postwar period had begun to recognize a need to reconceive their approach to their subjects of study and to refashion their disciplinary identity in more reflexive terms.

The combination of these interests undergirded the decision to apply the Smithsonian's resources to the organization of a program supporting international anthropological research, broadly construed. The results of this collaborative work became synthesized through the production of scholarly publications, museum exhibits, and films. Other collected data, such as field notes and material artifacts, were assembled and stored for future use within the Smithsonian's archives. Through its tripartite function as a site supporting the research, display, and storage of ethnographic data, the Smithsonian provided the ideal combination of funds, scholarly heft, and infrastructure needed to carry out a program in urgent anthropology. This combination of objectives problematizes the general characterization of museums after World War II as institutions primarily for entertainment and public education and suggests a need to reconsider their role in facilitating innovative research in the human and life sciences during this period.

It also reflects the continued significance of archives as repositories containing information with both past and potential future value.

Although urgent anthropology's inclusion as part of the existing programs within the Smithsonian provided it with the basic structure needed to carry out international anthropological research, at the same time this placement generated tensions over whether the Institution should compromise its traditional museum activities to pursue other kinds of projects. For the Smithsonian's anthropologists, these considerations likewise called into question their responsibilities as curators as well as the appropriateness of the inclusion of anthropology within the National Museum of Natural History. These anxieties helped justify the reorganization and expansion of urgent anthropology through the establishment of the Center for the Study of Man, the National Anthropological Film Center, and the proposed Museum of Man. Yet the shifting interdisciplinary objectives of these endeavors ultimately made it difficult to define a suitable administrative arrangement that did not somehow undermine the Institution's other research and curatorial commitments. Thus while the organizational composition of the Smithsonian made urgent anthropological work a possibility, it also limited the extent to which it could fully develop.

Taking into consideration the conclusions outlined above, one last question remains: to what extent did the Smithsonian's urgent anthropology program actually fulfill its goals? The results are mixed. Although it never achieved the size or status of other large-scale initiatives like the International Geophysical Year or the International Biological Program, urgent anthropology did succeed in assembling and storing a permanent body of ethnographic data. Under the management of Samuel Stanley, the

Urgent Anthropology Small-Grants program successfully funded about eighty research projects in thirty countries from 1966 until 1978, and provided additional financial support to aid the acquisition of cultural artifacts (Appendix 1).[705] Following Stanley's retirement, Ives Goddard continued to oversee the review and allocation of funds supporting urgent research until the early 1980s, at which point the relatively small amount of available money and general lack of interest resulted in fewer and fewer grant applications.[706] Up until its dissolution in 1981, the National Anthropological Film Center facilitated the production of several dozen film projects in collaboration with filmmakers and anthropologists working in Africa, South America, and especially Southeast Asia and the Pacific (Appendix 2).[707] Almost all of the research carried out through these programs produced publications, research notes, films, and other materials that can now be accessed as part of the holdings of the National Anthropological Archives and the Human Studies Film Archives. Other reports and results can also be found preserved in the back issues of *Current Anthropology*.

Finally, this dissertation's primary focus on the Smithsonian does not consider the lasting contributions of other institutions and individuals working on urgent projects during the period under consideration and beyond. Although I have argued that urgent anthropology reached its peak under the guidance of Ripley and Tax, one cannot ignore the previous efforts of Robert Heine-Geldern, who first brought up the need to document so-called disappear cultures at the 1952 meeting of the International Congress of

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[705] Samuel Stanley, "Urgent Anthropology: A Report, 1966-1978," June 30, 1978, Department of Anthropology Records, box: Urgent Anthro Alpha File Q-T, folder 1, NAA.
[706] Personal correspondence with the author, April 28, 2016.
[707] E. Richard Sorenson, *In Quest of the Expressions of Humankind: The Progress of the National Human Studies Film Center (An Occasional Paper)* (Washington, DC: The National Anthropological Film Center, 1981), 26-28.

Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES) in Vienna, Austria. Anticipating Tax's use of *Current Anthropology* as a forum for consolidating urgent projects by about a decade, Heine-Geldern began printing lists and suggestions for urgent work in 1958 through the UNESCO-sponsored *Bulletin of the International Committee on Urgent Anthropological and Ethnological Research*.[708] After his death in 1968, *Current Anthropology* took on many of these responsibilities. In spite of this shift in leadership, the *Bulletin* continued to be published well into the 2000s, first edited by Heine-Geldern's protégé Anna Hohenwart-Gerlachstein from 1969 until 1994 and then managed jointly with her niece, Stephanie Wiesbauer-Hohenwart, until her death in 2008. Today, Wiesbauer-Hohenwart remains the sole editor of the *Bulletin* at the University of Vienna and oversees its production as part of the IUAES Commission on Urgent Anthropological Research.[709]

More recently, from 2011-2015 the Royal Anthropological Institute in London offered fellowships supported by the Royal Anthropological Institute and Anthropologists' Fund for Urgent Anthropological Research (AFUAR).[710] These fellowships originated through the sponsorship of anthropologist George Appell, who has

[708] *Bulletin of the International Committee on Urgent Anthropological and Ethnological Research*, no. 1 (Vienna: International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, 1958).
[709] The International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, "Commission on: Urgent Anthropological Research," updated in 2009, accessed May 8, 2016, www.iuaes.org/comm/urgent.html. For more on the history of the anthropology department at the University of Vienna and its ties to urgent anthropology, see Andre Gingrich, "Department's History since 1900: An Overview," Institut für Klultur- und Sozialanthropologie, Universität Wien, accessed May 8, 2016, http://ksa.univie.ac.at/en/department/history/.
[710] Royal Anthropological Institute, "Fellowships: Urgent Anthropology Fellowship," updated 2016, accessed May 8, 2016, https://www.therai.org.uk/awards/fellowships/urgent-anthropology-fellowship. These fellowships continued the tradition of awarding research grants in urgent anthropology begun by the Anthropologists' Fund for Urgent Anthropological Research in 1993.

actively pursued different channels of urgent anthropology as a vehicle for human rights activism and environmental stewardship since the late-1960s.[711]

Within the Smithsonian, since 2011 work has also begun on digitizing film, audio, and other records revitalizing endangered languages as part of its "Recovering Voices" initiative. Organized through a collaboration of the National Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of the American Indian, and the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, this program utilizes the Institution's resources and archives to counteract the disappearance of distinct linguistic knowledge.[712] In addition to working with communities to support the preservation of their languages and cultural heritage in the midst of increasing global homogenization, Recovering Voices has also argued for the program's contributions to maintaining biological diversity. As Smithsonian Curator of Globalization Joshua Bell notes, "When languages disappear, society loses unique environmental and cultural information as well as specific insights into many fields of knowledge and thought including mathematics, biology, geography, agriculture, history and religion."[713] Today, the program continues to advocate for the interdisciplinary significance of language documentation through its participation in cultural and environmental festivals, interdepartmental seminars, and other forms of museum and digital outreach. Thus while urgent anthropology as conceived by Tax and Ripley may have faded, its intellectual legacy within the Smithsonian remains alive and well.

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[711] For more about these activities, see George Appell interview with Alan Macfarlane, April 19, 2004, DSpace, University of Cambridge, uploaded 30 November 2004, accessed May 8, 2016, https://www.dspace.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/3479. This interview is part of Macfarlane's larger "Ancestors" project, itself a kind of "salvage" effort devoted to recording and digitizing oral histories with elder anthropologists for the sake of posterity. These can be accessed on Macfarlane's website, and are currently being curated on HAU Network of Ethnographic Theory, "'Ancestors': Interviews by Alan Macfarlane," 2016, accessed May 8, 2016, http://www.haujournal.org/haunet/macfarlane.php.
[712] Joshua Bell, "Recovering Voices: Documenting and Sustaining Endangered Languages and Knowledge," *AnthroNotes* 3 (August 2011): 7-9.
[713] Ibid., 7.

Appendix 1: Smithsonian Institution, Urgent Anthropology Small Grants Program, 1966-1978

Source: Samuel Stanley, "Urgent Anthropology: A Report 1966-1978," 30 June 1978, Department of Anthropology Records, box: Urgent Anthropology AlphaFile Q-T, folder 1, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Suitland, MD.

Year	Grantee	Project Title/Description	Location	Field of Study	Award Amount
1966	Duhyun Lee	A Study of Korean Material Culture in the South Korean Village of Sam Jong Dong	South Korea, Asia	Ethnology	$1,000
1966	Roberto Lizarralde	An Ethnographic Study of the Bari Indians (Motilone) in Venezuela	Venezuela, South America	Ethnology	$500
1966	Pedro Manuel da Silva	An Ethnography of the Material Culture of Kamayura of the Alto Xingu Region of Brazil	Brazil, South America	Ethnology	$1,000
1967	Oldemar Blasi	Salvage Archeology of Old Spanish and Jesuit Communities that contained a large Indian Population in Southern Brazil	Brazil, South America	Archeology	$650
1967	Roque de Barros Laraia	A Study of the Social Organization of the Urubu-Kaapor Indians in the State of Maranhao, Brazil	Brazil, South America	Ethnology	$1,000
1967	Emilio Mendizabal	A Study of the Cultural Complex of Coca in Peru	Peru, South America	Ethnology	$600
1967	G. Reichel-Dolmatoff	An Ethnology of the Desana Indians of the Vaupes Area of Colombia	Colombia, South America	Ethnology	$500
1967	Silvio C. Dos Santos	A Study of the Indian Groups Xokleng and Kaingang, in the State of Santa Catarina, Brazil	Brazil, South America	Ethnology	$2,000

1968	Jürg Gasché; Mireille Guyot	A Contribution to the Ethnography of the Putumayo and Caqurta Area of the Northwest Amazon	Northwest Amazon Region, South America	Ethnology	$1,000
1968	Raymond F. Kennedy	A Study of the Traditional Music of the Native People of Ponape, Eastern Caroline Islands	Caroline Islands, Micronesia, Oceania	Ethnology	$150
1968	Ronald J. Kurtz	A Salvage Ethnographic Survey of the Northwest Half of Liberia	Liberia, Africa	Ethnology	$2,000
1968	Dorothea Agnes Lehmann	A Research Survey of the Languages and Dialects of the Kafue Basin of Zambia	Zambia, Africa	Linguistics	$1,000
1968	Lorenz G. Löffler	The Completion of an English-Bawm, Bawm-English Dictionary (Tibeto-Bruman Language Family)	Tibet; Burma, Asia	Linguistics	$900
1968	Joli Morgan	Production of an 8mm Film of the Way of Life in the Eskimo Village of Kasigluk	Alaska, United States, North America	Linguistics	$300
1968	G. Reichel-Dolmatoff	Research on the Desana Indians	Brazil, South America	Linguistics	$1,200
1968	A.H.N. Verwey	A Study of the Ceremony Inaugurating a Tibetan Style Monastery in Switzerland	Switzerland, Europe	Linguistics	$1,000
1969	A. Aiyappan	A Monographic Study of the Paniyas of the Wynad, Kerala State, India	India, Asia	Ethnology	$880
1969	Jean E. Brown	Complete Collection of Kenya Tribal Material plus Information on Technological Processes	Kenya, Africa	Ethnology	$1,150
1969	Robert D. Bruce	A Study of the Lacadon (Maya) Indians of Chiapas, Mexico: Their Drawings and Paintings	Mexico, North America	Ethnology	$1,000

1969	David Clark	A Study of the Kibera, A Nubian Community in Nairobi, Kenya	Kenya, Africa	Ethnology	$450
1969	Ronald J. Kurtz	A Salvage Ethnographic Survey of the Southeast Part of Liberia	Liberia, Africa	Ethnology	$250
1969	L.K. Mahapatra	Hindu Prices and Caste Dynamics in Orissa, India	India, Asia	Ethnology	$1,000
1969	Nityananda Patnaik	The Changing Sacred Complex in Orissa: A Study of the Cult of Jagannath and its Temple	India, Asia	Ethnology	$800
1969	S. Sartono	Pleistocene Man in Indonesia: Caretaker Surveillance of the Sangiran Site	Indonesia, Asia	Physical Anthropology	$900
1970	A.W. Eriksson	Analysis of Blood Samples for Enzyme Group Studies in Northeast Lapland, Finland	Finland, Europe	Physical Anthropology	$1,000
1970	Marguerite R. Jellicoe	The Cosmology and Religious Ideas of the Rimi (Nyaturu) of Singida District, Tanzania	Tanzania, Africa	Ethnology	$1,000
1970	Alice Bee Kasakoff	Demography, Descent Groups, and Marriage among the Gitksan	Canada, North America	Ethnology	$834
1970	Venice Lamb	Narrow Strip Handloom Weaving in Ghana: Study and Collection	Ghana, Africa	Ethnology	$800
1970	Frank Lobo	A Study of the Oral Histories and Languages of the Ahashamen Band of San Juan Capistrano, California	California, United States, North America	Linguistics	$1,000
1970	L.A. Malcolm	Growth and Development in Various New Guinea Communities	New Guinea, Oceania	Physical Anthropology	$700

1970	Henning Siverts	Study of the Aguaruna Jivaros of the Upper Maranon, Departamento de Amazonas, Peru	Peru, South America	Ethnology	$1,000
1970	Jun Takeda	A Study of the Traditional Japanese Hunters (Matagi) of the Village of Utto, Northern Japan	Japan, Asia	Ethnology	$300
1971	Keith H. Basso	The Writing System of Silas John: A Western Apache Shaman	Arizona, United States, North America	Ethnology-Linguistics	$1,000
1971	Stephen J. Beckerman	Study of the Bari (Motilones) of Colombia	Colombia, South America	Ethnology	$990
1971	Ondemar Dias, Jr.	An Archeological Project in Minas Gerais, Brazil	Brazil, South America	Archeology	$650
1971	Daniel Fabre; Jacques Lacroix	Collection of Folk tales in Bas-Languedoc and Fesetivals in the Pyrenees and in Languedoc	France, Europe	Ethnology	$1,000
1971	Eva M. Hooykaas	Kwaiker Linguistic Study (Southern Colombia and Northern Ecuador)	Colombia; Ecuador, South America	Linguistics	$1,000
1971	Tadataka Igarashi	Ecological Studies on "Yama-ate" in Akuseki-jima, Tokara Island, Japan	Japan, Asia	Ethnology	$352
1971	Francine Lancelot	A Lexicology of Steps Used in "Farandoles" in Southern France	France, Europe	Ethnology	$1,000
1971	Jose Maceda	An Ethnomusicological Survey of the Philippines	Philippines, Asia	Ethnology	$1,000
1971	Peter Oches	Puluwatan Oral Lore (East Caroline Islands)	Caroline Islands, Micronesia, Oceania	Ethnology	$850

1971	Ann Osborn	Study of the Tunebo, Northeastern Colombia	Colombia, South America	Ethnology	$1,000
1971	Patricia Whittier	Completion of an Ethno-linguistic Survey of East Kalimantan (Borneo)	Borneo, Asia	Linguistics	$950
1972	Lyle Campbell	Study of Xinca of Jamatepeque, Guatemala	Guatemala, North America	Ethnology	$435
1972	Charles Frantz	Study of 10 Nigerian Societies: Chibbuk, Longua, Bille, Jen, Kaka, Kyenti, Ndoro, Tigon, Sayaawa, and Bassa-Nye	Nigeria, Africa	Ethnology	$975
1972	Karl W. Luckert	A Study of Navajo Coyoteway	New Mexico, United States, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1972	Alan G. Marshall	The Environmental Basis of Nez Perce Subsistence	Pacific Northwest, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1972	Shuichi Nagata	Study of Three Negrito Communities	Philippines, Asia	Ethnology	$1,000
1972	Karl H. Schlesier	Cheyenne Vision Quest, Bear Butte, South Dakota	South Dakota, United States, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1973	Lowell J. Bean	Study of the Ethnology and History of the Serrano Indians of California	California, United States, North America	Ethnology	$650

1973	James H. Howard	A Study of a Yanktonai Dakota Winter Count Text	Upper Midwest, United States, North America	Ethnology	$500
1973	Charles R. Smith	Study of the Tubatulabal Indians in Southern California	California, United States, North America	Ethnology	$925
1973	Oswald Werner	To Complete a Sound Recording of the Navajo Night-Chant Ceremony	Southwest, United States, North America	Ethnology	$312
1973	Donald E. Cook	Study of the Serrano Language	California, United States, North America	Linguistics	$550
1974	Etsuko Kuroda	A Study of the Mixe Indians in Ayutla and Tlahuitoltepec, Oaxaca, Mexico	Mexico, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1974	Pamela Lang Munro	Recording of George Laird's Chemehuevi Myths and Stories	Southwest, United States, North America	Ethnology	$780
1974	Sally R. Pablo	A Study of the History, Language, Songs, Legends, and Crafts of the Gila River Pima	Arizona, United States, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1974	Alexander Rosler	Study of the Aguaruna Jivaros of the Alto Maranon of Peru	Peru, South America	Ethnology	$1,000

1975	James A. Clifton	Compilation of a Master List of Potawatomi Names	Midwest, United States, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1975	Elliot M. Fratkin	Production of Three Films of the Traditional Rites of the Samburu of Northern Kenya	Kenya, Africa	Ethnology	$1,000
1975	Patricia Guthrie	A Study of the "Gullah" Sea Island Community: St. Helena Island, South Carolina	South Carolina, United States, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1975	Jeffrey A. Hart	Survey of Montana Native American Ethnobotany	Montana, United States, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1975	Sigrid Khera	Study of Kinship Relations Among the Yavapai Indians of Arizona	Arizona, United States, North America	Ethnology	$947
1975	George W. McDaniel	Study of Slave Dwellings and Plantation Communities in Maryland	Maryland, United States, North America	Archeology-Ethnohistory	$1,000
1975	James L. Rosellini	Multi-Media Documentation of the People of Upper Volta	Upper Volta, Africa	Ethnology	$1,000
1975	Dennis Wiedman	Research on the Organization of the Native American Church of North America	Oklahoma, United States, North America	Ethnology	$500

1976	Raymond DeMallie	Fieldwork among the Yankton and Yanktonai Dakota	Upper Midwest, United States, North America	Ethnology	$800
1976	Walter Morris	Investigation of the Embroidered and Brocaded Symbols of the Tzotzil-Tzeltal Maya of Chiapas, Mexico	Mexico, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1976	Robert Oswalt	Northeastern Pomo Salvage Project	California, United States, North America	Linguistics	$1,000
1976	Benedict Sandin	Iban Shamanism and Rites of Healing	Malaysia, Asia	Ethnology	$1,000
1977	Neil Big	To Record Landais Patronal Festivals and Interview Elderly Performers and Participants	France, Europe	Ethnology	$1,000
1977	Randy Bouchard	Cultural Summary of Comox, Sechelt and Pentlatch Coast Salish	Pacific Northwest, North America	Ethnology	$1,000
1977	Sachiko Hatanaka	Tuamotuan Chants from Reao Atoll, Eastern Polynesia	Polynesia, Oceania	Ethnology	$941
1977	Susan M. Nielsen	Salvage Work on Kalapuya	Oregon, United States, North America	Linguistics	$1,000
1977	Laurel J. Watkins	Gather Linguistic Data on the Kiowa Language	Oklahoma, United States, North America	Linguistics	$1,000

1978	Jeffrey Erenreich	Ethnographic Study of the Coaiquer Indians of Northern Ecuador	Ecuador, South America	Ethnology	$1,000
1978	Judith Kempf	Ethnographic Study of the Coaiquer Indians of Northern Ecuador	Ecuador, South America	Ethnology	$1,000
1978	Douglas Parks	Recording of Traditional Arikara Music	North Dakota, United States, North America	Ethno-Musicology	$1,000
1978	Ann Fienup-Riordon	Eskimo Gift Distribution	Alaska, United States; Canada, North America	Ethnology	$1,000

Appendix 2: Collaborative Research Film Studies of the National Human Studies Film Center (as of September 1981)

*Estimate based on level of financial support at time of report
Source: E. Richard Sorenson, *In Quest of the Expressions of Humankind: The Progress of the National Anthropological Film Center* (Washington D.C.: Human Studies Film Center, 1981), 26-28.

Year	Principal Investigator(s)	Project Title	Project Director(s)	Culture/ Region	Local Affiliated Institution/ Sponsor	Amount Footage Collected
1961-1962	Richard Sorenson	Research Film Studies of Traditional Indian Life in Brazil	Richard Sorenson, William Crocker	Tarahumara, Chihuahua, South America	National Institutes of Health	5,000 ft.
1963-1968	Richard Sorenson	Research Film Study of Traditional Heritage of Papua New Guinea	Richard Sorenson	Fore, Eastern Highlands, Papua New Guinea, Oceania	National Institutes of Health	60,000 ft.
1965-1985*	Richard Sorenson	Research Film Study of the Life Style of the Caroline Islands of Micronesia	Richard Sorenson	Carolinian, Ulithi and Fais, Yap District, Micronesia, Oceania	National Institutes of Health	9,000 ft.

1968	Richard Sorenson, Wayne Dye	Research Film Study of Traditional Heritage of Papua New Guinea	Richard Sorenson	Bahienemo, Sepik District, Papua New Guinea, Oceania	Summer Institute of Linguistics	6,000 ft.
1975-1989*	Richard Sorenson, William Crocker, Steven Schecter	Research Film Studies of Traditional Indian Life in Brazil	Richard Sorenson, William Crocker	Canela, Maranhao, Brazil, South America	Museo do Indio	126,700 ft.
1976-1985*	Richard Sorenson, Mathias Maradol, Steven Schecter	Research Film Study of the Life Style of the Caroline Islands of Micronesia	Richard Sorenson	Carolinian, Puluwot Atoll, Micronesia, Oceania	Micronesian Area Research Center	10,000 ft. (by Sept. 1981)
1976-1985*	Richard Sorenson, Mathias Maradol, Steven Schecter	Research Film Study of the Life Style of the Caroline Islands of Micronesia	Richard Sorenson	Carolinian, Ifaluk, and Woleai, Yap District, Micronesia, Oceania	Micronesian Area Research Center, Outer Islands Chiefs Council	63,000 ft. (by Sept. 1981)
1977-1988*	Richard Sorenson, Johan Reinhard	Research Film Studies of the Cultural Heritage of Nepal	Richard Sorenson, Lain S. Bangdel	Tharu, Terai, Nepal, Asia	Royal Nepal Academy	2,000 ft. (by Sept. 1981)

1978-1987*	Richard Sorenson, Gyatsho Tshering; Ragpa Dorjee	The Research Film Study of Traditional Tibetan Civilization	Richard Sorenson	Ladakh, India, Asia	Library for Tibetan Work, Archives, Dharmsala, India	191,360 ft. (by Sept. 1981)
1978-1988*	Richard Sorenson, Barbara Johnson	Research Film Studies of the Cultural Heritage of Nepal	Richard Sorenson, Lain S. Bangdel	Jyapu, Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, Asia	Royal Nepal Academy	204,600 ft.
1978-1989*	Richard Sorenson, Lain Bangdel, Ragpa Dorjee	Research Film Studies of the Cultural Heritage of Nepal	Richard Sorenson, Lain S. Bangdel	Bhotia, Mustang, Nepal, Asia	Royal Nepal Academy	135 frames (by Sept. 1981)
1978-1989	Richard Sorenson, Ragpa Dorjee	Research Film Studies of the Cultural Heritage of Nepal	Richard Sorenson, Lain S. Bangdel	Nepal, Asia	n/a	8,000 ft.
1978-1990*	Michael Maloney, Richard Sorenson, Wayne Dye, Richard Loving	Research Film Study of Traditional Heritage of Papua New Guinea	Richard Sorenson	Miyanmin, Bowye Creek, Papua New Guinea, Oceania	Summer Institute of Linguistics, Institute for Papua New Guinea Studies	80,100 ft.

1979-1988*	Richard Sorenson, Gyatsho Tshering; Ragpa Dorjee	The Research Film Study of Traditional Tibetan Civilization	Richard Sorenson	Karnataka, Mundgod, Bylekuppe, Hunsur, Kulu/Manali, India, Asia	Library for Tibetan Work, Archives, Dharmsala, India	n/a
1979-1988*	Richard Sorenson, Ragpa Dorjee	Research Film Studies of the Cultural Heritage of Nepal	Richard Sorenson, Lain S. Bangdel	Tamang, Shriar Khola Valley, Nepal, Asia	Royal Nepal Academy	3,000 ft. (by Sept. 1981)
1980-1987*	Richard Sorenson, Gyatsho Tshering; Ragpa Dorjee	The Research Film Study of Traditional Tibetan Civilization	Richard Sorenson	Orissa, Chandigirhi, India, Asia	Library for Tibetan Work, Archives, Dharmsala, India	108,170 ft.
1980-1990*	Michael Maloney, Richard Sorenson, Paul Vollrath, Richard Loving	Research Film Study of Traditional Heritage of Papua New Guinea	Richard Sorenson	Hewa, Wayne Village, S. Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea, Oceania	Summer Institute of Linguistics, Institute for Papua New Guinea Studies	21,450 ft. (by Sept. 1981)
1981-1986	Jayasinhji Jhala	n/a	n/a	Bharward, Gujerat, India, Asia	Institute for Audio-Visual Resources, Dhranghardra, Gujerat	4,000 ft.

1981 (est.)	Michael Maloney, Richard Sorenson, Tahir Ali	Filmic Inquiry into the Cultural Heritage of Pakistan	Michael Maloney	Burusho, Hunza, Pakistan, Asia	Institute for Folk & Traditional Heritage	400 frames (by Sept. 1981)
1981 (est.)	Richard Sorenson, Kalman Muller, Michael Maloney, Ota Joseph	Resaerch Film Study of Traditional Polynesian Performance and Life Style of the Cook Islands	Richard Sorenson	Cook Islands, Polynesia, Oceania	Cultural Development of the Cook Islands	36,700 ft.
1981 (est.)	Richard Sorenson, Mathias Maradol, Ota Joseph	Research Film Study of Traditional Polynesian Performance and Life Style of the Cook Islands	Richard Sorenson	Pukapuka, Polynesia, Oceania	Cultural Development of the Cook Islands	28,000 ft.
1981 (est.)	Richard Sorenson, Steven Schecter, additional tbd.	Traditional Expressions of Indonesian Heritage	Richard Sorenson, Steven Schecter	Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, Oceania	Frank Morgan, University of Indonesia	projected

1981 (est.)	Richard Sorenson, Steven Schecter	Filmic Inquiry into the Traditional Heritage of the Philippine Islands	Richard Sorenson, Steven Schecter	Negrito, Occidental, Mindanao, Luzon, Philippines, Oceania	Export-Import Bank	projected
1981 (est.)	Francis Deng, Michael Maloney	Film Study of the Dinka Heritage	Francis Deng, Michael Maloney	Dinka, South Sudan, Africa	n/a	projected

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CURRICULUM VITAE

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